

James Simpson - The Sand Paper (Eagles Nest Airport Owner's Vision Takes Flight)

From: Glenn Catana
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Fuel, Hangars, Recreation and an Eventual Flight School in the Works Section Two

Sep 06, 2012

"You've never seen me this excited," said Eagles Nest Airport owner Peter Weidhorn, grinning like a schoolboy, glancing around his property as he watched, before his eyes, "the culmination of a dream."

The work of turning the once-sleepy, underutilized airport into a viable, general aviation, public access airport – and a community asset for recreation and education – has been a three-year process fraught with challenges, obtaining permits, investing a fortune and winning the trust and approval of the township. Ultimately Weidhorn wants to open a flight school at the airport to cultivate the love of flying in the next generation of aviators.

The transformation has begun this summer, with a credit-card activated, self-service fuel tank, 15 hangars and infrastructure improvements including storm water drainage, parking, electric, potable water and sanitary system. Once the hangar unit is operational – Weidhorn anticipates Sept. 30 – an FBO (fixed-base operator) will be opened with computer flight planning and weather, he added.

A recent visit to the airport property showed a newly paved entrance/exit drive and an automatic security gate. The cement slabs had been poured, bolts were in place and asphalt had been laid for the newly delivered, partially assembled hangar structures – an assembly crew out of Ohio was working day and night to put them together. There were two new outbuildings for housing electrical and phone distribution systems; Dan Ludwig from Garden State Electric of Manasquan was on site monitoring the progress of the electrical work.

A runway landing light system and a new taxiway are planned for next year, with anticipated grant funding from the state Department of Transportation. "Within the last year, 12 acres of trees have been removed and the land on the north side of the runway graded in anticipation of the construction of a taxiway system for which the NJDOT is funding the engineering design," according to Weidhorn.

"The safety overrun area at the end of each runway has also been reestablished, stabilized and extended," he wrote in a recent newsletter to the pilot community. "Thanks to the expansion of the Garden State Parkway, the trees on the western end of the runway have been removed. In addition, the trees in the median have been reduced, thus making the landing path shallower."

Weidhorn is a Manalapan resident, retired from a career in commercial real estate ownership/management, immediate past chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Union for Reform Judaism and current chairman of the Community Development Trust in New York City, a national affordable-housing organization owned by national banks and insurance companies.

He owns a total of 125 acres in Eagleswood, comprising the airport and six adjacent parcels. He has already invested an estimated \$2.5 million, in development costs and the purchase of the 65-acre property from Diane Kummings in 2009 for \$925,000, plus an additional 60 acres for \$670,000 more. Weidhorn said Kummings sold him the airport, not to get the best price she could, but rather in the best interest of the end users. "She was really committed to the pilots," he said.

"I am a transformed individual," Weidhorn said of the project's impact on him personally. "I've never built something like this before," from vision to actualization. Support from fellow pilots has been encouraging, with pilots volunteering their time and resources to cutting the lawn and donating mower decks and a snowplow.

The pilots themselves are invested in the project, he said, and the pilot community is growing, through the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

In the two months since the 6,000-gallon-capacity fuel tank was installed, the airport has sold 3,500 gallons of fuel, Weidhorn said. By spreading the word among the pilot community about his plans, he has reserved 12 of the 15 hangar rentals and has seven planes tied down.

The airport serves as a base for three banner towing companies that work Long Beach Island and for the Southern Ocean Radio Control Flyers, a model plane club. Other activities at the airport include a Boy Scout Aviation Explorer group, members of which help pick up litter and debris in exchange for airplane rides. Also in the works is the formation of a flying club, whereby a group of 10 to 20 people would chip in to buy an aircraft together and share ownership and expenses.

"Transportation for lunch is available from Calloways Restaurant, ... a wonderful fly-in destination, and they will be happy to pick you up at the airport," he added. "Enterprise rental cars will also drop a car at the airport, or taxi service can be arranged.

"Every day I'm here, people show up asking about the airport," he said.

As if on cue, a man on a bicycle made an appearance. Summoned by Weidhorn with a friendly wave, he pedaled over and introduced himself as Tom Resch, a 17-year resident of Eagleswood and a supporter of the airport. He and his neighbors agree, he said, the airport is a positive ratable that increases their property value. Resch said he has enjoyed paying regular visits to the airport, on foot or on his bike, to watch the work coming along and seeing the number of planes grow.

Coming up soon on the to-do list is to equip a motion detector system on the fuel tank and to install two forms of runway lighting: pilot-activated Runway End Identifier Lights (REILs) and Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) lights, which allow a pilot to set up an angle or slope for landing. Both will enhance safety, Weidhorn explained. He also has Tapestries Sign and Design of Manahawkin working on a handsome sign for the main entrance, with gold lettering on a dark-green background and stone supports, to increase visibility for motorists on Stafford Forge Road.

While on site, Weidhorn conducted his regular test for fuel purity. Demonstrating, he operated the sump that pulls fuel out from the bottom of the tank and into a bucket – onlookers were surprised by the bright-blue color that indicates 100LL fuel, in accordance with industry standard. (By contrast, Jet A is red.) Routinely, Weidhorn inspects it for sediment, dirt or impurities. If any were to be found, he would pump out enough fuel until the sediment was gone, then have the contaminated fuel analyzed.

When all the work is done, Weidhorn said, he plans to host a ribbon-cutting event, sometime in the fall. More details about the airport's progress and offerings can be found at eaglesnestairport.com. Weidhorn welcomes and encourages questions, suggestions and feedback about the airport and can be reached at eaglesnestairport@yahoo.com.

James Simpson - MUST READS: 11.5.12

From: "Sarah Dolan" <sarah.dolan@gov.state.nj.us>
To: "Sarah Dolan" <sarah.dolan@gov.state.nj.us>
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GOVERNOR'S TOUR & PRESS CONFERENCE IN HOBOKEN

NJ Gov. Christie urges residents to adopt 'new normal' as they return to school and work

Angela Delli Santi

Associated Press

New Jersey was attempting to bounce back to what Gov. Chris Christie called "a new normal," to begin the first full work week since a hybrid superstorm knocked the state's legs out from under it. Electricity had been restored to about 2 million customers as of early Monday, NJ Transit buses were operating at 90 percent and gasoline was flowing at more and more stations that had powered back up. But Sandy's devastation also left the state with huge challenges ahead — hundreds of thousands were entering their sixth day without electricity, natural gas had been cut off to barrier islands, where roads remained choked with sand and impassible, PATH service remains suspended and at least 4,000 residents were being housed in shelters. "We're returning to a new normal," Christie said Sunday. "One where power is coming back on, people can fuel up again in their cars, where kids can go back to school, roads are cleared and we'll have clean water to drink."

Christie: NJ continues to recover from superstorm, cites progress being made

Associated Press

Gov. Chris Christie says all 21 New Jersey counties will now be included in the major disaster area declaration, so all residents will now be able to seek assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Administration. Christie made the announcement during a news conference in Hoboken on Sunday afternoon. The governor also said progress has been made in restoring power to those who lost their service when Superstorm Sandy struck last weekend. Christie noted that fewer than 1 million residents were without power as of Sunday, compared with 2.7 million who lost their electricity at the height of the storm. Christie called the change "substantial progress." The governor also said he's hopeful the PATH service will reopen by the end of the week.

N.J. sees a 'new normal,' but fears approaching storm

Aubrey Whelan

Inquirer

Joined by Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Gov. Christie told residents Sunday the state was slowly getting to a "new normal" after the ravages of Sandy - while warning that progress could be threatened in days by another storm. An approaching nor'easter could bring 50 m.p.h. winds and three to four inches of rain Tuesday into Wednesday, enough to set back strides made toward stabilizing Shore towns and other communities still in shock over the devastation last week's historic storm wrought. "We're hoping it goes somewhere else," Christie said. In case it doesn't, he assured residents the state was "preparing for it" - whatever "it" ends up being.

Gov. Christie: N.J. residents should try to 'get back to work tomorrow'

Matt Friedman

Star-Ledger

Gov. Chris Christie said New Jersey residents should go to work Monday, even if they have to use different modes of transportation than they're used to. "I think people should try to get back to work tomorrow. All the state roads are clear except for four," Christie said during an outdoor press conference with Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, after the two toured a relief center in town. The two talked about ongoing relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. Christie encouraged commuters to use New Jersey Transit buses, 90 percent of which are running; or the train system, four lines of which are running, including two directly into Manhattan. Other commuters should car pool, Christie said. "Be smart. We're in the throes of a back-end of a crisis," Christie said.

Christie Talks 'New Normal' as Power Comes Back in N.J.

Tim Jones, Terrence Dopp and Romy Varghese

Bloomberg

The number of New Jersey residents without power from superstorm Sandy fell below 1 million yesterday, Governor Chris Christie said. Yet a fresh storm may be just a few days away, bringing high winds and flooding rain. "For those of you out there who don't have power and are at a neighbor's house or at a friend's house or the Elks Club, I know when I tell you we're under 1 million people from 2.7 million, it's not going to mean a damned thing to you unless your power's on -- I get it," Christie said at a news briefing yesterday. Sandy blacked out more than half the state Oct. 29. Christie said he will "continue to use my type of gentle persuasion" to prod utilities to restore power as soon as possible, at the briefing in Hoboken. He said it may take to the end of the week to get everyone back online. A nor'easter may barrel into the state Nov. 8, packing gusts as high as 50 miles (80 kilometers) per hour and heavy rain, delaying the work, according to the National Weather Service.

N.J. Gov. Chris Christie embraces federal government in Hoboken

Matt Pearce

Los Angeles Times

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie continued to express gratitude for the federal government's help at a televised news conference Sunday in Hoboken, N.J. With Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano at his side, Christie sent love to New Jersey residents for their recovery efforts and promised guff — "my type of gentle persuasion" — to utility companies to help the nearly 1 million customers in the state who still lack power, most in central and northern New Jersey. Every county in New Jersey has been declared eligible for federal disaster assistance, and Christie, a Republican, has remained a larger-than-life presence in a region where super storm Sandy's effects remained overwhelming. "I've been all over the state, and everywhere I've traveled -- whether it's a local shelter or a Red Cross shelter, an impromptu roadside table that neighbors have put together to provide food and drinks for people who are working -- this is the symbol of New Jersey coming together during a really difficult time," he said.

NJ governor praises Obama but will vote for Romney

Associated Press

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie told an Israeli TV interviewer Sunday that President Barack Obama deserves praise for his efforts to help his state recover from Superstorm Sandy, but he is still going to vote for Republican nominee Mitt Romney. Christie, a leading Romney surrogate, delivered the keynote speech at the Republican National Convention. Last week, he toured New Jersey's battered shore towns with Obama and discussed recovery assistance. The two embraced and had words of praise for each other's efforts to relieve the misery the superstorm brought to New Jersey residents — a rare display of bipartisanship during a bitter election campaign that has left the country deeply polarized. "Honestly the fact of the matter is that what New Jerseyans expect from their governor is to work for them, not to work for any particular political party," Christie said in an interview from New Jersey broadcast on Israel's Channel 2 TV, which had sent one of its main anchors to report on the presidential campaign and storm aftermath.

Christie: Praise of Obama after Sandy won't change my vote for Romney

Matt Friedman

Star-Ledger

It was hard to tell if Gov. Chris Christie was amused or annoyed when asked yesterday about the chatter surrounding his lavish praise for President Obama's response to Hurricane Sandy. Christie gave an intentional cough before launching into an answer in front of hundreds of cold but friendly Hoboken residents: "This is the kind of silliness that really drives me crazy." The governor then recited all he had done for Mitt Romney, Republican presidential nominee: Being among the first officials to endorse him. Crisscrossing the country campaigning for him. Raising millions of dollars. "I did that because I thought when I endorsed him he was the best person to bring America back," Christie said. "Its jobs, its economy and its greatness in the world. I still believe that today. And I don't understand why telling the president of the United States that he's done a good job when he's done a good job equals an endorsement."

Christie tells critics of Obama praise: 'When somebody does a good job, they deserve credit' — he's still voting for Romney

Reuters

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie defended his praise for President Barack Obama's support after superstorm Sandy, but said he would stick with his Republican ticket and vote for Mitt Romney in this Tuesday's election. "The fact of the matter is what New Jerseyans expect from their governor is to work for them, not to work for any particular political party," Christie told Israel's Channel 2 television in an interview broadcast on Sunday. "I'm a Republican and I have endorsed Mitt Romney, I support him and I intend to vote for him on Tuesday," said Christie, interviewed in his home state by a visiting Israeli television reporter... "If the president of United States comes here and he's willing to help my people and he does it then I'm gonna say nice things about him because

he's earned it."

GOVERNOR ROMNEY IN PENNSYLVANIA

Romney praises Gov. Christie's 'heart and passion'

Steve Peoples

Associated Press

Mitt Romney is praising New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's response to Hurricane Sandy. The Republican presidential candidate told supporters in Pennsylvania Sunday night that Christie is giving "all of his heart and his passion" to help his state recover from the storm that wreaked havoc along the East Coast last week. President Barack Obama visited New Jersey storm victims with Christie last week. The New Jersey governor publicly praised the president's leadership after the disaster, but on Sunday he said he still intended to vote for Romney. Romney did not praise Obama but thanked "the governors that are dealing with this tragedy." The Republican candidate made his comments at an evening rally in eastern Pennsylvania, along the New Jersey border.

Romney gives Christie a shout-out

Maggie Haberman

Politico – Burns & Haberman

Via POLITICO's James Hohmann, Mitt Romney gave a shoutout to Gov. Chris Christie at a frigid rally in Pennsylvania: "Thanks also to the governor that are dealing with this tragedy, particularly I think about the governor of New Jersey, Governor Christie. He's giving it his all and his heart and his passion to help the people of his state. They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work. Thank you, governor." Discussing Sandy has not been routine for Romney the last two days, but Pennsylvania is one of the states hit by the storm, and is adjacent to Jersey. The unsubtle message - no hard feelings for the praising of President Obama for how he handled the storm, and a reminder to the crowd that Christie, who's also gotten kudos for how he's dealt with the aftermath, is a Romney backer.

Romney Overlooks Christie's Praise for Obama

Michael Barbaro

New York Times – The Caucus

Gov. Chris Christie's lavish praise for President Obama in the days since Hurricane Sandy has raised eyebrows across the Republican establishment. Mitt Romney had a message of his own on Sunday night: It does not bother him. Not publicly, anyway. At a rally here, Mr. Romney seemed determined to play down any hint of tension between his campaign and Mr. Christie, the New Jersey governor, whose kind words have given the president an unexpected bipartisan credential in the final days of the campaign. "He's giving it all of his heart and his passion to help the people of his state," Mr. Romney said. "They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work. Thank you, governor."

Romney praises Christie disaster response

Rachel Streitfeld

CNN Political Ticker

If Mitt Romney is upset with Gov. Chris Christie for praising President Obama, he didn't show it Sunday night. In fact, the GOP presidential candidate singled out the fiery New Jersey governor in a speech to 25,000 outside Philadelphia, lauding Christie's response to Superstorm Sandy. "He's giving it all of his heart and his passion to help the people of his state," Romney said. "They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work. Thank you, governor."..."I don't look at what happened with the storm and how it affected so many people through a political lens," said adviser Kevin Madden. "Instead, we are focused on what we can do to make sure that the enthusiasm that we have seen in states, that it's part of helping our get out the vote efforts in all these key battlegrounds and then just focusing on the message."

Romney praises Christie for storm response

Chris Laible

Fox News

Mitt Romney expressed gratitude Sunday night for strong leadership in areas still reeling from Monster Storm Sandy, singling out New Jersey Governor Chris Christie for "his hard work" during the recovery effort..."He's giving it his all and his heart and his passion to help the people of his state," Romney said of Christie during a rally in neighboring Pennsylvania. "They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work."...Asked about the compliments, Christie bristled at the accusation he was turning his back on his party. "I'm a Republican and I have endorsed Mitt Romney, I support him and I intend to vote for him on Tuesday," he said during an interview. "If the president of United States comes here and he's willing to help my people and he does it then I'm gonna say nice things about him because he's earned it."..."Our hearts go out to you," Romney said. "If you have some extra

funds that you can provide to people, please contact the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army or any other groups that are helping provide care for those that are having a tough time."

ELECTIONS

Lt. Gov: N.J. officials working to make sure Sandy victims can vote

MaryAnn Spoto

Star-Ledger

Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno said the Christie administration is doing all it can to ensure victims of Hurricane Sandy will get to vote by Tuesday's election. With many Sandy victims saying voting isn't high on their list of priorities, Guadagno said several laws have been suspended to accommodate those who can't get to polling places or whose places have been damaged or left without power. Any registered voter can cast a ballot by email or fax by 8 p.m.. Tuesday — a system already used by troops and residents living overseas — or they can call 1-877-NJVOTE. First responders who can't get home to vote can go to a county clerk's office or call that number. An order signed by Guadagno, who is also the Secretary of State overseeing elections, extended the time for mail-in ballots to be counted.

Half of polling places knocked out by Sandy restored

Salvador Rizzo

Star-Ledger

More than half of the polling places knocked out by Hurricane Sandy have been restored, but the counties where the storm hit hardest still have 300 places out of commission, state officials announced today. "Since the storm's impact, more than 500 polling places that had lacked power or were inaccessible will now again be able to serve as a polling location," Ernest Landante, a spokesman for Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno, said today. "As power continues to be restored, we expect more polling places to become usable." Sandy swallowed up or blew out the lights at more than 800 polling places — one-quarter of the approximately 3,000 locations across New Jersey — and officials from both parties were in overdrive today scrambling to give citizens enough alternatives to cast their ballots on Tuesday.

Thousands of Bergen, Passaic voters seize the chance to vote early

John C. Ensslin

The Record

Finally there was a long line in Bergen County that did not involve gasoline. This line formed outside the County Administration Building in Hackensack on Sunday, where a steady stream of more than 1,700 registered voters filed in to vote early. "We had lines out the door," said Bergen County Clerk John Hogan. "It was like something we've never seen in an election before." Because of disruption caused last week in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, the clerk's offices in Bergen and Passaic maintained extended hours over the weekend where voters applied for absentee mail-in ballots they could fill out and submit immediately.

GAS RATIONING SYSTEM

Long gas lines remain in most of NJ, but drivers coping with waits, gas rationing rules

Associated Press

Long lines remained the norm at many gas stations in central and northern New Jersey on Sunday, but motorists said their concerns over fuel were easing as more stations resumed operations across the state. Most drivers also seemed to be coping with the gas-rationing system imposed by Gov. Chris Christie in 12 of the state's 21 counties, though many questioned whether it was needed. And numerous drivers admitted they were traveling to counties where the restrictions were not in place to get their gas. Under the rationing system, drivers with license plates ending in an even number can buy gas on even-numbered days, and those with plates ending in an odd number on odd-numbered days. Drivers with vanity plates that have no numbers can buy gas on odd-numbered days.

Gas lines shorten, tempers ease

Rebecca Baker, Matthew McGrath and Michael Linhorst

The Record

The second day of statewide gas rationing appeared to make a difference Sunday with waits for fuel taking less time than they were last week. A sampling throughout Bergen and Passaic counties showed lines were routinely a quarter- to a half-mile long. A few weeks ago, that would have seemed unthinkable — but compared with the 2-mile-long lines that were routine last week, Sunday's waits were a relief. "The lines are much shorter and the tempers are much better," said Bergen County Prosecutor John Molinelli, who said he visited a few stations where officers were on patrol. The rationing, put in place on Saturday, allows only drivers whose license plates'

final number is odd to buy gas on odd-numbered days, and those with plates whose final number is even to fuel up on even days. The restriction only applies to passenger vehicles.

N.J. sees more gas flowing, but long lines persist a week after Sandy

Craig Wolff
Star-Ledger

The long silvery tankers that haul gasoline around New Jersey are accustomed to clockwork routine: Ten to 15 minutes waiting at a fuel terminal; 10 minutes under the loading "rack;" then a trip to a local gas station. In normal times, the whole process typically takes no more than 90 minutes, and usually much less. Hurricane Sandy, though, upset that routine, in turn adding more complexity to what had been a humdrum chore for motorists — filling up their car's gas tank. Today, as more gas stations in the state returned to full power, there were accounts from relieved drivers of waits under a half-hour. Many credited Gov. Chris Christie's creation of a system that divides cars based on license plate numbers and the day of the month.

While Fuel Is Promised, Drivers Wait Hours for Gas

Winnie Hu and Vivian Yee
New York Times

As long lines persisted at pumps across the region, government officials and gas station owners in New York and New Jersey said Sunday that the fuel shortage could last for several more days as stations struggled to maintain supplies or reopen after losing power...In New Jersey, where Gov. Chris Christie has imposed a rationing system limiting gas sales to even-numbered license plates on even days, and odd-numbered license plates on odd days, lines were noticeably shorter in some places, including Essex County, though many stations remained closed around the state. Near Newark Liberty Airport, Havier Nazario, 36, a school principal, said he stood in line with dozens of people to fill up a five-gallon container for his car, which was parked in front of his house with an empty tank. After two hours, and with two people ahead of him, the station ran out.

NEW JERSEY RECOVERY

Utility crews making progress restoring power to New Jerseyans

Associated Press

Utility crews are making progress restoring electricity in New Jersey one week after Sandy downed trees and power lines and flooded substations. There are 779,571 homes and businesses without service. Public Service Electric & Gas says it has restored power to about 78 percent of its customers that have been without electricity. Another 375,000 are still waiting. Jersey Central Power & Light is reporting 382,036 outages, mainly in Monmouth County. JCP&L says most should be back by Wednesday. Orange & Rockland has 21,949 without service, mainly in Bergen County. Atlantic City Electric has whittled the number down to 586, mostly in Atlantic County.

Number of N.J. customers without power post-Sandy falls below 1M

Ed Beeson
Star-Ledger

New Jersey's utilities crossed a collective milestone today. Fewer than 1 million customers were without power tonight, according to data released by the four utility companies servicing the state. While still a significant number, that's down from the 1.2 million utilities said were without power as of Saturday night, and the 2.7 million left in the dark a week ago when Hurricane Sandy struck. Among those getting power back were schools, gas stations and polling places. Public Service Electric & Gas, the state's largest utility, said it has restored power to about 80 percent of the schools, 3,000 polling stations and about 78 percent of the gas stations in its service area.

Forecasters tracking another coastal storm that threatens Sandy cleanup in NJ

Associated Press

Forecasters are tracking another coastal storm that threatens cleanup and recovery efforts from Sandy in New Jersey. The National Weather Service says the nor'easter could hit the region on Wednesday into Thursday. The storm could produce strong winds, heavy rain and cause moderate tidal flooding along the coast, Raritan Bay and lower Delaware Bay. Buildings and trees weakened by Sandy would be vulnerable to additional damage. The storm would also hamper efforts to restore electricity that was lost during Sandy.

Officials: Long Beach Island residents will be able to briefly return home on Monday

Associated Press

Long Beach Island residents will be able to briefly return to their homes Monday. The island was severely damaged when megastorm Sandy crashed into the Jersey shore, and residents have been kept away ever since. Officials say residents will be allowed in from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. But there will be no access for homes in Holgate and North Beach, due to unsafe conditions in those areas. To gain entry to the island, residents will have to show

a re-entry placard, a driver's license or proof of residence, such as a tax bill. Nonresidents and those who do not have proper residence documentation will not be granted entry. Only one vehicle per residence will be allowed to enter the island, and no children under 12 or pets are permitted.

Sandy's Blackouts Fall to 1.9 Million; New Jersey Worst Affected

Jim Polson and Mark Chediak

Bloomberg

Utility crews working around the clock restored power to another 640,000 homes and businesses since Nov. 3, with New Jersey making up more than half of the 1.9 million still without electricity. By the sixth day after Hurricane Sandy struck, power companies had brought back the lights to 78 percent of the 8.5 million customers who lost it in the storm's destructive path. State officials voiced approval of the work accomplished, which included restoring power to most of Manhattan, while renewing warnings that utilities' response to the crisis is being closely watched by regulators and lawmakers...Recovery progressed slowly in New Jersey, where Sandy came ashore near Atlantic City at 8 p.m. Oct. 29. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, a Republican, praised the "patience and resilience" of New Jerseyans and released a timeline yesterday of which neighborhoods should be restored over the next few days. He pledged to hold utilities to the schedule.

Taxpayer Storm Shield Protects Casinos While Poor Take on Water

Michael C. Bender and Chris Strohm

Bloomberg

As superstorm Sandy flooded Atlantic City, New Jersey, one area was shielded from damage by dunes constructed at taxpayer expense: casinos and other beachfront businesses and homes. Nearby, another set of residents didn't get government-paid storm defense. In one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, water from Absecon Inlet crested onto streets, flooding homes and businesses. What unfolded in this East Coast resort city of 40,000, the second-largest U.S. gambling market behind Las Vegas, shows how government decisions helped businesses escape almost unscathed and open just days after the storm, while people living paycheck to paycheck suffered. "The government has protected their cash cow, the casinos, at the expense of the people," said Edsel Coates, 57, whose home near the inlet flooded and roof caved in. "The casinos are receiving preferential treatment and there's neglect of the average Atlantic City resident."

Port Authority: 2 more northern NJ ports shuttered by superstorm are due to reopen Monday

Associated Press

Two more northern New Jersey marine terminals shuttered by superstorm Sandy are reopening for business. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey says Global Terminal in Jersey City and the Port Newark Container Terminal will open Monday morning. Both terminals will open their gates for truckers at 7 a.m. The first ship will arrive at the Global Terminal at 7 p.m., while Port Newark expects vessel traffic to resume Monday night. The reopenings come one day after operations restarted at the Port Elizabeth Terminal. Four cargo vessels were expected at the Maher Terminal there on Sunday, while one cargo vessel was expected at the APM Terminal. The Port of New York and New Jersey is the largest on the East Coast, and the third largest in the nation.

Port resumes operations in Sandy's wake

Steve Strunsky

Star-Ledger

The East Coast's busiest port got back to business today after being swamped Hurricane Sandy's surge. Longshoremen began unloading a variety of cargo this morning at the Maher and APM container terminals along Newark Bay in Elizabeth, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said. Several ships were expected at the two terminals today, said the Port Authority. The Port Newark terminal in Newark and the Global terminal in Jersey City are scheduled to open its gates on Monday morning, followed by the first vessel's arrival at Global at 7 p.m., the Port Authority said. Joe Curto, president of the New York Shipping Association, which represents stevedores and other companies that do business at the port, said the companies and their union workers from the International Longshoremen's Association were eager to be back on the job.

N.J. unveils emergency bus plan for Monday commute

Hannan Adely

The Record

New Jersey officials rolled out a massive emergency bus plan to help residents get back to their jobs Monday after Hurricane Sandy crippled public transportation. The emergency plan, announced Sunday, includes fleets of buses that will leave from local lots to ferry and rail lines with connections to New York City, and in some cases will deliver passengers straight to lower Manhattan. The buses will help ease the congestion after the storm, which crippled rail lines and closed the Holland Tunnel to all but bus traffic. "Our rail infrastructure is still heavily damaged and our rail capacity into New York Penn Station can only transport a fraction of our weekday

customers," said NJ Transit Executive Director James Weinstein. "These are extraordinary times, the busing plan announced today will help bring our customers back to work – and just a little bit closer to resuming their everyday lives."

Cleanup, gas rationing continue in NJ after storm

Ben Nuckols

Associated Press

New Jersey residents found ways Sunday to adjust to gas rationing in effect from the superstorm, by ignoring the state's longstanding law against pumping your own gas, handing off gas cans on the way to the Giants game or just driving far from home to avoid the rules. And along the shore, people in one town traded kayaks for rain boots as floodwaters finally receded and they returned to their homes to assess damage. About 1 million homes and businesses across New Jersey remained without electricity Sunday, and many of those customers may not have service restored until Wednesday. The storm has been blamed for 23 deaths in the state and more than 100 overall. Gov. Chris Christie said Sunday that all 21 New Jersey counties will now be included in the major disaster area declaration, so all residents will now be able to seek assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Administration. And despite the despair the storm had brought the state, he has seen people working together to provide for others everywhere he has traveled in New Jersey since the storm hit.

A Q&A on ... disaster insurance

Star-Ledger

Hurricane Sandy has shuttered — and shredded — businesses throughout New Jersey. It's the type of storm that climate change experts have predicted: Bigger. Nastier. Worsened by higher water temperatures and heavier moisture in the air. As severe weather wreaks more havoc, business leaders, be they conservative or liberal, are seeing the impact on their bottom line. When Hurricane Katrina devoured the Gulf Coast in 2005, sweeping away roads, power lines and entire buildings, hundreds of thousands of people were left jobless. It led to a severe cutback in consumer spending and tax revenues. Andrew Logan, director of the insurance program for Ceres, a nonprofit coalition of investors and environmentalists, spoke to Star-Ledger editorial writer Julie O'Connor last week about the scary economics of our wilder weather.

Unfinished 9/11 Museum Is Flooded

David W. Dunlap

New York Times – City Room

The main floor of the National September 11 Memorial Museum at the World Trade Center is flooded with at least five feet of water. The extent of the damage is not clear. The most important and vulnerable of the artifacts on the floor is the last column left standing from the twin towers, which is covered with graffiti spray-painted by first responders, rescuers and recovery workers. A spokeswoman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which controls the trade center site, said Thursday that it was too early to tell how much of the last column was under water. The spokeswoman, Lisa MacSpadden, said officials "will have to assess once the pumping is complete."

With nor'easter approaching, N.J. more vulnerable to storms thanks to Sandy's destruction

Stephen Stirling and Dan Goldberg

Star-Ledger

In any given winter, New Jersey shrugs off nor'easters and other storm systems by the dozen. Life goes on. The state keeps moving. But the new reality after Superstorm Sandy flattened the coastline is far different. With many of the state's protective dunes destroyed or seriously eroded, a storm that last year would barely be noticed can now become a serious problem, causing major coastal flooding and further endangering homes and businesses along the staggering shoreline. "We don't have any coastal defense, and we have an entire winter storm season coming," said David Robinson, the state climatologist at Rutgers University. "That could be a serious problem."

Signs of progress tempered by continuing frustrations

Hannan Adely and John C. Ensslin

The Record

As North Jersey enters its second week of post-Sandy chaos, residents can expect more mass-transit choices and shorter gas lines. But they will still be coping with a crowded commute, lingering power outages and still more school closings. If that isn't enough to deal with, weather forecasters are still tracking a possible nor'easter that could sweep through the area by midweek — earlier than originally predicted — possibly bringing a mix of snow and rain that could further stress the area's battered power lines and trees. And then, how's this for an extra complication? Some voters on Tuesday will need to find their way to polling places — dozens of which have been moved because they still lack power. On Sunday, nearly a million state residents remained in the dark.

Frustration high across North Jersey as utilities fall short on power goals

Mary Jo Layton

The Record

Nearly 1 million New Jersey residents remained without power Sunday as temperatures dipped, patience waned and some North Jersey mayors criticized utilities for failing to restore service. The frustration was particularly high in still-dark towns where PSE&G had indicated power would likely be restored by Saturday, including Fort Lee, Ridgewood and Teaneck. "I'm scared to go into the buildings in my own town," said Fort Lee Mayor Mark Sokolich. "These people are freaking. It's now five or six days without power. They expect it to be on. They were told they would have power and it's not on." The growing anger comes at a time when there's been steady but slow progress in other areas: Mass transit has begun operating throughout most of the state, panic at the gas lines seems to be easing and some schools are reopening Monday.

Website launched to accept donations for Christie's Sandy relief fund

Ben Horowitz

Star-Ledger

A website has been launched for the newly established Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund, Gov. Chris Christie and First Lady Mary Pat Christie announced today. Following Saturday's establishment of the fund, New Jerseyans may visit www.SandyNJReliefFund.org to make donations online. The fund will provide a "critical mechanism" to collect donations and assistance and help families affected by the destruction of the storm and will continue well beyond "the initial stages" of recovery, according to spokesmen for Christie. "As recovery efforts continue, we know that even greater needs will become apparent for our families who have been impacted so deeply and extensively by this disaster, Christie said in a statement. "This fund – and now this website – will give fellow New Jerseyans and those around the country an avenue to contribute to our efforts and to assist our neighbors and communities throughout the recovery period."

Crews from around the region coming to help with Sandy aftermathInquirer

It's not just famous musicians who are helping victims of Hurricane Sandy. Lots of help from crews in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and around the United States are providing equipment and manpower. Camden County sent trucks and a crew to Longport to help with moving sand and other cleanup. The county sent two mobile radio repeaters - equipment that allows first responders to access a state Office of Emergency Management channel - to Monmouth County. Monmouth's eight police departments and other emergency personnel have been operating without full communications capabilities since the storm. "All counties are dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy together," said Camden Freeholder Ian Leonard.

Coast Guard crew finds several navigation hazards during first post-storm patrol of Sandy HookAssociated Press

A Coast Guard crew has uncovered several potential navigation hazards during the agency's first patrol of Sandy Hook waterways since Superstorm Sandy hit the region a week ago. The small-boat crew off the Coast Guard Cutter Ridley, which is homeported in Montauk, N.Y., conducted its mission Saturday. While performing the law enforcement patrol, crew members observed various hazards in the Sandy Hook Bay and inlet, including a sunken vessel, floating debris and displaced aids to navigation buoys. Coast Guard officials urged boaters to be aware of these and other potential hazards while traveling in Sandy Hook's waterways. The Ridley is one of many Coast Guard cutters that were deployed to the New York and New Jersey waters to assist in harbor assessments, recovery efforts and law enforcement.

North Jerseyans, groups mobilize to help Sandy's victims

Rebecca Baker

The Record

From state-run efforts to help thousands left without heat or without homes to neighborhood events that will help a few families in need, there seems to be no shortage of ways to donate time, money and supplies to those hardest hit by the storm. And those who have organized Sandy fundraisers say they have been besieged by generosity. "I'm completely overwhelmed by what people are willing to bring and donate," said Seth Ruderman, a Wayne resident who collected enough goods and money within 48 hours to fill five rental trucks with supplies for victims in New York City, where he grew up. "I still have donations coming in." By Sunday, countless organizations had mobilized to respond to public interest in donating to storm victims.

As Gov. Christie reassures N.J., residents rocked by Sandy reach out to help others

Mike Frassinelli and Ted Sherman

Star-Ledger

After one of the worst weeks in state history, with miles of coast levelled, thousands of homes shredded and

millions left in the cold and dark, Gov. Christie tried to rally New Jerseyans at a press conference Sunday. "We're returning now to a new normal," he said from Hoboken, where he was joined by U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. "One where power is coming back on, where our people are able to start to fuel up again in their cars, where kids will be going to school, roads are cleared and we'll have clean water to drink." The number of New Jersey households without power has finally dropped below 1 million, he said, compared with 2.7 million on Tuesday. The new normal had a few rough patches, however, especially when it came to one of the state's most precious commodities: gasoline. When 75 percent of the state's gas stations went off line, millions of drivers spent hours on lines in the middle of the night, often for naught. Over the weekend, power was restored to the refineries and pipelines, and National Guard tankers are moving some of it to gas stations that ran out of fuel, he said.

Football game brings some relief from storm damage

Associated Press

Courtney Davis has no idea what her house looks like because her town of Sea Bright was washed away by Superstorm Sandy. Yet she was at the Meadowlands on Sunday when the Steelers beat the Giants 24-20. "We need this," Davis said. "We could really use this game and having a good time." Davis and many other fans tailgating outside MetLife Stadium said they were thankful NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell did not postpone the game or order it moved to Pittsburgh. And Goodell stopped by to do some tailgating himself, then meet on the field and congratulate first responders, calling them "heroes." Asked about concerns for playing the game, Goodell said: "I sure didn't hear that here. I didn't hear it out in the parking lot. In fact, exactly the opposite of that ... 'we want to be able to get away from what we have been dealing with all week for a while' and a couple of guys said, 'This re-energized us. We're ready to go back.'

Storm Poses First Major Test for NJTV News Coverage

Elizabeth Jensen

New York Times

During his 6 p.m. newscast Thursday, the NJTV anchor Mike Schneider got a little cranky on the air, after twice trying, unsuccessfully, to interview Representative Frank LoBiondo, Republican of New Jersey, over a patchy cellphone line. "I'm going to make an executive decision here right now, control room," Mr. Schneider said. "We're going to just basically move on." His annoyance was understandable. He and his minimal staff at the public broadcaster had been churning out up to three live newscasts, many news breaks and several official news briefings daily since Oct. 28, the previous Sunday, to try to keep up with Hurricane Sandy and its aftermath. NJTV's efforts, all of which were also streamed on its Web site, were modest compared with the major commercial broadcasters in New York City, which were on the air around the clock. But they were a leap forward for NJTV, which does not have live transmission trucks and is not set up for covering a statewide disaster.

OPINION

Chris Christie has the chance to be a real leader on climate change

David Sirota hosts the morning show on AM760 in Colorado and is a contributing writer at Salon.com.

The Oregonian

In light of horrific wildfires, a historic drought and now the destruction wrought by Hurricane Sandy, the political understatement of the year has to be President Barack Obama's recent comment to MTV. Asked about climate change's absence from all presidential debates for the first time in a generation, he said, "I am surprised it didn't come up." Instead of "surprised" he should have said "appalled" -- because that's what he and most Americans should be. As Scientific American reports, while no one weather event can be blamed on climate change, science now definitively "link(s) climate change directly to intense storms and other extreme weather events."...It's his choice. Here's hoping he makes the right one before it is too late.

Working together in wake of storm

Editorial

The Record Editorial Board

Beyond scenes of unimaginable destruction and crazy-long gas lines, some of the enduring images of the storm that hit our state a week ago today have got to be Governor Christie and President Obama embracing while touring Sandy-ravaged Brigantine. That is how government is supposed to work. When there are problems to be solved or a disaster to deal with, you forget about political party. If there is no Democratic or Republican way to fix a pot hole, as the old saying goes, there certainly is no Democratic or Republican way to rebuild after a devastating storm. We saw that last week, and it was nice to see. The governor effusively praised the response of the federal government to Sandy's wrath, and the president returned the favor, telling the press Christie would do all he could to rebuild.

Tomorrow, a crucial vote on two state ballot questions

Editorial

Star-Ledger Editorial Board

President Obama and Sen. Robert Menendez are expected to win New Jersey handily in the two key races tomorrow, so those with a casual attitude toward the duties of citizenship might be tempted to save some gas by skipping the vote. Please get off the couch. If you don't care about making your voice heard in the marquee races, remember the two important state ballot questions. One would authorize a bond issue of \$750 million for higher education. That's a smart investment, with bipartisan support. It will create good jobs and help ensure that middle-class kids have a shot at a good, affordable college education. New Jersey is near the top in spending on K-12, and near the bottom on higher education. For every 100 kids who graduate high school, we have room for only 19 in public colleges and universities. The labs and classrooms are often shabby.

Looking for the faces of mass transit

Alfred P. Doblin

The Record

A week after Hurricane Sandy, the effectiveness of three regional leaders has been much dissected by the media and public. Governor Christie, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg have been front and center these past seven days. Less prominent have been the three regional leaders of the transit networks that traverse New York and New Jersey. Let me correct that to two transit officials. Joe Lhota, the chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, is worth his weight in gold — or at least old subway tokens. The New York subway didn't get up to speed fast enough to help most commuters last week, but Lhota did the thing leaders are supposed to do: He gave answers and took questions in the public's eye.

Storm shows Jersey's vulnerabilities

Jeff Tittel is the director of the New Jersey chapter of the Sierra Club.

The Record

New Jersey continues to recover from the heartbreaking damage of Hurricane Sandy. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the families impacted by this tragedy. This is the ninth such devastating storm to hit the Garden State in the last five years, and the impacts of climate change will only make such storms worse. We have had hurricanes and Halloween snowstorms. There have been too many coincidences. You cannot deny that climate disruption is a factor and it is impacting New Jersey. We need to protect our families from the impacts of climate disruption and sea level rise. In New Jersey, we deserve strong action by our leaders to help reduce the likelihood and severity of future disasters.

###

FULL ARTICLESGOVERNOR'S TOUR & PRESS CONFERENCE IN HOBOKEN**NJ Gov. Christie urges residents to adopt 'new normal' as they return to school and work**Angela Delli Santi
Associated Press

New Jersey was attempting to bounce back to what Gov. Chris Christie called "a new normal," to begin the first full work week since a hybrid superstorm knocked the state's legs out from under it.

Electricity had been restored to about 2 million customers as of early Monday, NJ Transit buses were operating at 90 percent and gasoline was flowing at more and more stations that had powered back up. But Sandy's devastation also left the state with huge challenges ahead — hundreds of thousands were entering their sixth day without electricity, natural gas had been cut off to barrier islands, where roads remained choked with sand and impassable, PATH service remains suspended and at least 4,000 residents were being housed in shelters.

"We're returning to a new normal," Christie said Sunday. "One where power is coming back on, people can fuel up again in their cars, where kids can go back to school, roads are cleared and we'll have clean water to drink."

Christie was urging schools to reopen Monday if it was safe to do so and residents to return to work, though it was difficult to assess how many would do so. As of Sunday afternoon, one-third of the state's 2,400 schools had committed to being open.

Christie acknowledged that commuting challenges remained, and he and Homeland Security Secretary Janet

Napolitano, who visited storm-damaged Monmouth and Hudson counties with Christie and Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno on Sunday, urged residents to use buses, carpool or stagger their work hours.

"Be smart. We're in the throes of the back end of a crisis," Christie said.

He emphasized that there was no gas shortage, and said now that power is back on at the refineries, more stations are receiving deliveries. Additionally, National Guard tankers have begun moving gas to stations in several counties where lines were longest.

Christie spent part of Sunday visiting a relief center at a Hoboken Elks Lodge, his sixth consecutive day of touring damaged areas by helicopter. He was asked at a press briefing afterward what he'd learned about New Jersey in the past several days.

"What I've learned is nothing," he said. "I've just had the things I already knew reaffirmed. This state is full of tough, gritty, no-nonsense, emotional people. You put all that together and it's a very interesting soup at a moment like this because people feel outwardly in this state. We are not a bunch of reserved quiet wallflower types."

A few of them were at Atlantic City's casinos, where it was clear "a new normal" hadn't yet been realized.

At the Tropicana casino, which reopened at 4 p.m. Friday, regulars and employees said Sunday afternoon that they had rarely if ever seen such sparse crowds. In parts of the casino, security guards and cocktail servers appeared to outnumber gamblers. There was one open craps table, and in the poker room, only two of the 27 tables were active, offering low-limit Texas Hold 'Em.

Tango's Lounge near the casino floor was empty except for regulars Genevieve Basile of Atlantic City and her friend Diane Caruso-Murphy of Tabernacle, who were sipping Mai Tais. Basile owns White House Subs, a cheesesteak shop that's been open since 1946 and took on 12 feet of water during the storm. It's likely to be closed for another month — the first extended closure in its history, said Basile, whose late father opened the shop when he was 20.

"I'm glad it didn't happen in my dad's lifetime," Basile said. "It has totally brought us to tears."

She said she was trying to help her 50 employees secure unemployment benefits.

"We've never laid anyone off, ever," she said. "Fired people, but never laid anyone off."

On the casino floor, Anna Brown, 69, was playing a 25-cent slot machine. Her home in nearby Ocean View was not damaged, so she decided to spend time at what she called her "happy place."

"I'm always here. I live 25 minutes from here. What am I going to do? Talk to the dog all day? I'd rather fight with the machine," Brown said.

###

Christie: NJ continues to recover from superstorm, cites progress being made

Gov. Chris Christie says all 21 New Jersey counties will now be included in the major disaster area declaration, so all residents will now be able to seek assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

Christie made the announcement during a news conference in Hoboken on Sunday afternoon.

The governor also said progress has been made in restoring power to those who lost their service when Superstorm Sandy struck last weekend.

Christie noted that fewer than 1 million residents were without power as of Sunday, compared with 2.7 million who lost their electricity at the height of the storm. Christie called the change "substantial progress."

The governor also said he's hopeful the PATH service will reopen by the end of the week.

###

N.J. sees a 'new normal,' but fears approaching storm

Aubrey Whelan

Inquirer

Joined by Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Gov. Christie told residents Sunday the state was slowly getting to a "new normal" after the ravages of Sandy - while warning that progress could be threatened in days by another storm.

An approaching nor'easter could bring 50 m.p.h. winds and three to four inches of rain Tuesday into Wednesday, enough to set back strides made toward stabilizing Shore towns and other communities still in shock over the devastation last week's historic storm wrought.

"We're hoping it goes somewhere else," Christie said.

In case it doesn't, he assured residents the state was "preparing for it" - whatever "it" ends up being.

AccuWeather reported Sunday that the Jersey Shore could experience more flooding from the approaching storm because Sandy destroyed so many dunes.

It is water the state does not need as residents along the coast spent the weekend dragging sodden belongings to curbs and grappling with removing sand from living rooms and businesses. Those people were considered the lucky ones in that they still had intact homes and businesses.

Napolitano drew attention to the less-fortunate survivors of Sandy, which she called one of the largest natural disasters ever to hit the United States.

"Housing is our No. 1. concern," she said. "There's still real hardship out there."

Earlier Sunday in Hazlet, Monmouth County, Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno expressed concern that some on the barrier islands, cut off from the mainland and operating without electricity and, likely, radio and television, didn't even realize another storm was headed their way.

Conditions are still dire on many of those islands, with natural-gas supplies to communities from Bay Head to Holgate cut off for what could be as long as eight months, Christie said.

In one of those communities, Seaside Heights, among the worst-hit beach towns, houses floated off foundations during Sandy, snapping natural-gas pipes. Keeping the gas on, Christie said, could cause devastating fires. While the state replaces the damaged gas infrastructure on the barrier islands, residents will be provided with propane tanks and converters, he said.

Christie offered no specifics regarding when residents would be allowed to return to their homes in those communities.

"I'm not letting anyone back on the barriers until it's safe," he said. "It's going to be a while before people get to go home."

The task ahead for the Federal Emergency Management Agency - which started setting up disaster-recovery centers Friday in New Jersey to help storm victims apply for aid - largely involves providing more permanent housing for thousands of the displaced, who are staying in apartments and hotels, Napolitano said.

Christie said Sunday all 21 New Jersey counties would be included in the major federal disaster area declaration, making all residents eligible to seek FEMA assistance.

Despite so many grim conditions, there's reason for optimism, Christie said.

Roads have been cleared, potable water has been restored to much of the state, and the number of homes without power has dropped from 2.7 million to just under a million.

"I know that when I tell you that, it doesn't mean a damn thing to you until your power's on," Christie said to

laughter. Acknowledging his renowned aggressive style, even spoofed over the weekend on Saturday Night Live, he added: "We'll continue to push and shove [the power companies], using my type of gentle persuasion. It's very subtle."

He said bus service had been mostly restored and that four lines of NJ Transit should be up and running this week, including two lines into New York's Penn Station. PATH trains into New York City - where tunnels flooded during Sandy - are a different story. Christie said ferry service had been increased between New Jersey and New York in the interim, as the state works on pumping out the tunnels.

In the meantime, commuters driving to work should try to carpool - and they shouldn't fear fuel shortages that created long lines at many stations in the northern part of the state over the weekend, Christie said. Power losses at refineries and pipelines during and immediately after Sandy had made gasoline deliveries impossible. Power to those facilities has been restored and Christie said he expected more fuel to be available this week.

One deadline loomed for state officials Sunday - Tuesday's election.

Although about 100 polling places were still without power Sunday, Guadagno said, the state was working to accommodate voters. Those displaced from their homes can vote by e-mail or fax, and polling places without power will enlist buses to act as temporary voting booths. Residents can also fill out provisional ballots at any New Jersey polling place, Guadagno said. Polling places without power may have to use paper ballots, which could delay vote-counting on election night, Christie said.

"We encourage you to vote - it's one of the ways we will get back to normal," Guadagno said.

In another step toward normalcy, Christie said he hoped to have children back in school by the end of the week, adding that 800 of the state's 2,400 schools would be open Monday. He said he wanted to stick to the state's mandatory 180-day school year and, with winter and possible snow days still approaching, didn't want to lose more time.

"I don't want teachers having to hold Fourth of July barbecues at school," he said.

###

Gov. Christie: N.J. residents should try to 'get back to work tomorrow'

Matt Friedman
Star-Ledger

Gov. Chris Christie said New Jersey residents should go to work Monday, even if they have to use different modes of transportation than they're used to.

"I think people should try to get back to work tomorrow. All the state roads are clear except for four," Christie said during an outdoor press conference with Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, after the two toured a relief center in town.

The two talked about ongoing relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.

Christie encouraged commuters to use New Jersey Transit buses, 90 percent of which are running; or the train system, four lines of which are running, including two directly into Manhattan. Other commuters should car pool, Christie said.

"Be smart. We're in the throes of a back-end of a crisis," Christie said.

Napolitano — who agency has been authorized to assist residents in all 21 counties — said FEMA has 4,400 personnel on the ground in New Jersey and is sending more.

"The goal is to build an even better New Jersey," she said.

Napolitano urged residents whose homes are uninhabitable to register with the agency, which will put them up in apartments and hotel rooms.

The press conference was held outside in front of hundreds of Hoboken residents, many of whom are still out of

power. Christie drew laughs from the crowd while sympathizing with their plight and on one occasion even cracking a joke at the expense of one of his own cabinet members.

For instance, Christie explained he did not have an estimate for restoring the PATH system between New Jersey and Manhattan. He said the tubes are no longer flooded, but the Port Authority still needs to ensure the electricity and signals are working properly. Then he said he'd make sure state Transportation Commissioner James Simpson would be on a test train.

"We'll put Simpson on the train in case things go really wrong. Completely disposable folks," he said. "But we don't want to put precious people like you on there until it's safe."

Overall, Christie said his goal is to have the state running close to normal by the end of the week. That means almost everyone's power is restored, most schools are reopened and the state's transportation infrastructure is functioning.

So far, 1.7 million of the 2.7 million households that lost power during the storm have seen it restored. Christie praised the response of PSE&G and JCP&L, but criticized Orange & Rockland Power, which supplies some North Jersey communities.

"I've got a special call with them this afternoon," said Christie, who said that their restoration to 61 percent of affected customers is "unacceptable."

He added that Atlantic City Electric has restored 98 percent of their customers and is sending work crews to central and North Jersey to help.

Things will not get back to normal any time soon on the barrier islands that were the most devastated by the storm. Christie said natural gas lines along them will need to be replaced entirely, and that it could take six to eight months.

"The barrier islands' natural gas system from Bayhead to Seaside Heights has been shut off. The reason it has been shut off is that dozens and dozens and dozens of homes have been knocked off their foundations, their pipes have been broken," he said. "We cannot keep natural gas running in that kind of unstable situation."

The governor also said the gas crisis in North Jersey should subside as more stations get power and supply lines are restored, unless the nor'easter that could hit the state on Wednesday complicates matters.

Unlike in New York, Christie said, he declined FEMA's offer to give free gas to residents, which Christie said caused "mayhem" across the river, where officials caused a rush by promising free gas, then had to stress to let first responders get it first.

"There's been no free gas given away in New Jersey. FEMA came to me and said that they want to give away free gas and I told them no," he said. "I was not going to set up the kind of mayhem in New Jersey that they had across the river."

###

Christie Talks 'New Normal' as Power Comes Back in N.J

Tim Jones, Terrence Dopp and Romy Varghese
Bloomberg

The number of New Jersey residents without power from superstorm Sandy fell below 1 million yesterday, Governor Chris Christie said. Yet a fresh storm may be just a few days away, bringing high winds and flooding rain.

"For those of you out there who don't have power and are at a neighbor's house or at a friend's house or the Elks Club, I know when I tell you we're under 1 million people from 2.7 million, it's not going to mean a damned thing to you unless your power's on -- I get it," Christie said at a news briefing yesterday. Sandy blacked out more than half the state Oct. 29.

Christie said he will "continue to use my type of gentle persuasion" to prod utilities to restore power as soon as possible, at the briefing in Hoboken. He said it may take to the end of the week to get everyone back online. A

nor'easter may barrel into the state Nov. 8, packing gusts as high as 50 miles (80 kilometers) per hour and heavy rain, delaying the work, according to the National Weather Service.

The 50-year-old Republican governor said about 4,000 residents were still in shelters and announced the opening of a new facility to accommodate more. On Nov. 2, he imposed gasoline rationing in 12 counties hardest hit by the storm. Sandy killed more than 100 people in 10 U.S. states; 24 were in New Jersey.

'New Normal'

"We're returning now to a new normal, where power is coming back on, where people are able to fuel up again in their cars and where kids are getting back to school," Christie said.

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said yesterday that there were 4,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel in New Jersey and more were on the way. She said housing is the main challenge and FEMA workers are trying to get people out of shelters and into longer-term alternatives.

Napolitano met yesterday with Christie and other state and local officials. She went to a school in Hazlet, where water and ice were being given out to those without power. The community is about 15 miles (24 kilometers) east of East Brunswick and south of Staten Island, the hard-hit New York City borough.

The region's recovery is uneven. Across some parts of New Jersey and New York that were swept by Sandy, power was restored and cleanup was under way. Yet frustration persisted in devastated outlying areas and gasoline remained in short supply as temperatures in the region dropped to near freezing. Residents began to plot their commutes to work tomorrow with transit services truncated or suspended.

Powered Up

"I have power and cable back, so I'm happy," said Marisa Peacock, 50, of Jersey City.

Peacock, a project manager at the American National Standards Institute in New York, expected getting to work today would take twice as long as normal. Instead of riding a commuter train, she said she'd board a bus, which she described as "unreliable."

NJ Transit, the region's commuter-rail operator, advised customers that normal service would be cut in half during today's rush-hour periods, with buses replacing some trains.

The death toll from Sandy was at least 111 nationwide, according to the Associated Press. There were 5,243 people and 107 pets in New Jersey shelters as a result of the storm, said Mary Goepfert, a state Emergency Management Office spokeswoman.

Christie said BP Plc got about 100 additional gas stations operating yesterday and he expects lines to shorten.

Delivering Meals

The U.S. Defense Department began delivering millions of ready-to-eat meals to affected areas, including about 500,000 that were scheduled to arrive yesterday in Lakehurst, New Jersey, according to a statement from the Pentagon.

A new East Coast storm will probably bring colder weather and rain later this week, hitting areas that are still recovering from Sandy, the weather service said on its website. It could cause beach erosion and flooding in some areas of the mid-Atlantic region and New England through early Nov. 9.

All but 65 of about 1,750 New York City public schools will reopen today, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said. He is the founder and majority owner of Bloomberg News parent Bloomberg LP.

As mayor of the nation's most-populous city, Bloomberg, like Christie, cited a desire to restore life's routines.

"We're working to help more people get their lives back to normal, and opening schools will be an important part of that," Bloomberg said.

Navy Ships

The U.S. Navy has sent three ships and about 2,000 sailors to the New York metropolitan area to assist recovery efforts, according to Courtney Hillson, a spokeswoman for the service.

The Navy is helping to repair the storm-damaged Hoboken Ferry Terminal and a Coast Guard station at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, Hillson said. Twenty-two Navy and Marine Corps helicopters are also being used in the effort, she said.

In Jersey City, across the Hudson River from Manhattan, Nabir Degnich, 34, said he is relieved that power was restored to his home, where he lives with his pregnant wife. He works at an Exxon gas station that has been without power for about six days and unable to pump fuel.

"Day after day, you feel it is getting better," Degnich said.

Outside a pizza shop near Main Street in Fort Lee, New Jersey, Helen Thompson, 73, said she hasn't had power since the day Sandy struck. To cope with the cold, the Edgewater resident said she puts on more clothes and sleeps more, "because my bed's so nice and warm."

Casino Capital

In Atlantic City, home to a dozen casinos on an Atlantic Ocean barrier island, piles of flood-damaged furniture dotted some streets yesterday. A few residents moved belongings from sodden basements in blustery winds.

Chest-high water flooded city resident Dianne McDevitt's basement, destroying her furnace and leaving an odor resembling paint fumes in upper levels of her three-story home.

A 50-year-old nurse, McDevitt said she doesn't have the money to have someone clean the mess in her basement and is worried about mold. She piled belongings on the curb, along with boardwalk wood that floated from a block away.

"I am just overwhelmed by it," McDevitt said. "I just don't know what to do."

Farther north, in Point Pleasant Beach, the sidewalk of Arnold Avenue included what used to be the contents of the first floor of Danielle Massood's home: two mattresses, toys, antique cabinets and a refrigerator.

Lucky House

"We're still pulling stuff out," she said, after taking off a white mask over her mouth while on her porch.

A pile of wet clothes lay by her feet. She said the kitchen has to be ripped out and the first floor has to be renovated.

Even with the loss of irreplaceable items such as her wedding video, Massood said she considers herself lucky.

"We're fortunate, because our house is still standing," said Massood, who teaches at Rutgers University. "A lot of people have nothing."

Across the street at the Pelican Point Motel, stacks of wood and wet carpet were piled in front. Inside, men were swinging hammers at the walls of the first floor rooms, which were falling with loud crashes.

Owner A.J. Befumo, 35, said they were removing the carpets and walls before mold grows.

"We're just trying to manage," he said.

"It's very tough to tell," Befumo said when asked if he plans to reopen next summer. "It's definitely not a certainty at this point."

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N.J. Gov. Chris Christie embraces federal government in Hoboken
 Matt Pearce
Los Angeles Times

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie continued to express gratitude for the federal government's help at a televised news conference Sunday in Hoboken, N.J.

With Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano at his side, Christie sent love to New Jersey residents for

their recovery efforts and promised guff – “my type of gentle persuasion” – to utility companies to help the nearly 1 million customers in the state who still lack power, most in central and northern New Jersey.

Every county in New Jersey has been declared eligible for federal disaster assistance, and Christie, a Republican, has remained a larger-than-life presence in a region where super storm Sandy's effects remained overwhelming.

“I've been all over the state, and everywhere I've traveled -- whether it's a local shelter or a Red Cross shelter, an impromptu roadside table that neighbors have put together to provide food and drinks for people who are working -- this is the symbol of New Jersey coming together during a really difficult time,” he said.

Christie said 11,000 utility workers were trying to restore power, and 8,000 came from out of state.

“I know that when I tell you we're under a million people out of power from 2.7 [million], that that doesn't mean a damn thing to you unless your power's on,” he said, drawing chuckles from his audience. “I get it, I get it, all right? So! We won't stop working until every last resident has their power back on.”

Christie also emphasized that “we do not have a fuel shortage.” The gas is there, he said, but power outages trapped the fuel at refineries and in pipelines that are now up and running.

National Guard tankers were moving fuel to stations throughout the state, Christie said, adding that President Obama promised 22 million gallons of fuel to be split between New Jersey and New York. Christie said 100 BP gas stations had restored power and had fuel in their tanks.

The governor said 800 of the state's 2,400 schools would open Monday, with more working to join their ranks.

Christie also announced the formation of a Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund, which had already received \$3 million in contributions, with \$2.5 million coming from John Hess of the Hess Corp., which owns many gas stations in the state. On its website Sunday, Hess Express prominently displayed data showing how much gas each of its stations had, which Google and the U.S. Department of Energy published on a map.

Napolitano, appearing with Christie, called housing “the number one concern.”

“We lost a lot of housing stock here in New Jersey,” she said. “We don't even know yet which of the houses are repairable and which are irreparable losses. Those assessments are going on right now as well as finding temporary housing for individuals who can't move back to their home right away.”

She added that officials were searching for apartments and hotels available as temporary Federal Emergency Management Agency housing and that the Department of Transportation was deploying 200 to 300 buses to transport riders between New York and New Jersey.

“We are not done with this storm by any stretch of the imagination,” she said.

###

NJ governor praises Obama but will vote for Romney

Associated Press

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie told an Israeli TV interviewer Sunday that President Barack Obama deserves praise for his efforts to help his state recover from Superstorm Sandy, but he is still going to vote for Republican nominee Mitt Romney.

Christie, a leading Romney surrogate, delivered the keynote speech at the Republican National Convention. Last week, he toured New Jersey's battered shore towns with Obama and discussed recovery assistance. The two embraced and had words of praise for each other's efforts to relieve the misery the superstorm brought to New Jersey residents — a rare display of bipartisanship during a bitter election campaign that has left the country deeply polarized.

“Honestly the fact of the matter is that what New Jerseyans expect from their governor is to work for them, not to work for any particular political party,” Christie said in an interview from New Jersey broadcast on Israel's Channel 2 TV, which had sent one of its main anchors to report on the presidential campaign and storm aftermath.

But Christie insisted that nothing that happened has caused him to waver in his commitment to Romney.

"I'm a Republican, I've endorsed Mitt Romney and I support him. I intend to vote for him on Tuesday," Christie said. "But the fact of the matter is that if the President of the United States comes here and he is willing to help my people, and he does it, then I'm going to say nice things about him because he's earned it."

"And I've said plenty of not-nice things about the president over time — he knows that. And we joked about that when we were together this week," Christies said.

Christie dismissed critics on the right who have accused him of giving a boost to Obama in the closing days of the campaign.

"The fact is that if somebody does a good job they deserve credit and New Jerseyans expect me to work with everybody — Republicans, Democrats, Independents —to get through this crisis and get the job done," Christie said.

If "anybody is upset in the Republican Party about this, then they haven't been to New Jersey. Come see the destruction, come see the loss, and then tell me if you're going to still criticize me for complimenting somebody who is the President of the United States and who has provided help to my people during one of the worst crises this state has ever faced," he said.

Christie said Sunday that all 21 New Jersey counties will now be included in the major federal disaster area declaration, making all residents eligible to seek assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

The governor also said progress has been made in restoring power to those who lost service when Superstorm Sandy struck last week.

Christie noted that fewer than 1 million residents were without power as of Sunday, compared with 2.7 million who lost their electricity at the height of the storm. Christie called the change "substantial progress."

###

Christie: Praise of Obama after Sandy won't change my vote for Romney

Matt Friedman
Star-Ledger

It was hard to tell if Gov. Chris Christie was amused or annoyed when asked yesterday about the chatter surrounding his lavish praise for President Obama's response to Hurricane Sandy.

Christie gave an intentional cough before launching into an answer in front of hundreds of cold but friendly Hoboken residents: "This is the kind of silliness that really drives me crazy."

The governor then recited all he had done for Mitt Romney, Republican presidential nominee: Being among the first officials to endorse him. Crisscrossing the country campaigning for him. Raising millions of dollars.

"I did that because I thought when I endorsed him he was the best person to bring America back," Christie said. "Its jobs, its economy and its greatness in the world. I still believe that today. And I don't understand why telling the president of the United States that he's done a good job when he's done a good job equals an endorsement."

Then he went into a rant that delighted onlookers.

"This shows you how broken our political system is," he said. "Because I say something nice about someone who does their job well, somehow that takes away my endorsement of Mitt Romney."

"Believe me, I can tell you this much: There are two people who know for sure, besides me, who I'm voting for on Tuesday: Mitt Romney and the president of the United States."

According to some news accounts, Christie's embrace of Obama rankled the Romney campaign, and an article on the website Politico quoted one adviser saying Christie's behavior had been "over the top" and that whether Romney wins or loses, "it won't be forgotten."

Christie dismissed the report as "garbage."

###

Christie tells critics of Obama praise: 'When somebody does a good job, they deserve credit' — he's still voting for Romney

Reuters

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie speaks during a press conference alongside United States Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano in Hoboken today.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie defended his praise for President Barack Obama's support after superstorm Sandy, but said he would stick with his Republican ticket and vote for Mitt Romney in this Tuesday's election.

"The fact of the matter is what New Jerseyans expect from their governor is to work for them, not to work for any particular political party," Christie told Israel's Channel 2 television in an interview broadcast on Sunday.

"I'm a Republican and I have endorsed Mitt Romney, I support him and I intend to vote for him on Tuesday," said Christie, interviewed in his home state by a visiting Israeli television reporter.

Christie, a popular governor widely seen as a possible Republican contender in 2016, had frustrated some in the Romney campaign who feared he had given what could be a critical boost to Obama, a Democrat.

He referred to Obama's pledge of federal aid during a visit to help New Jersey recover from the storm that knocked out power to some 2.4 million of its residents and said:

"If the president of United States comes here and he's willing to help my people and he does it then I'm gonna say nice things about him because he's earned it."

Obama "provided help to my people at one of the worst crises that this state has ever faced," Christie added. "When somebody does a good job, they deserve credit."

"Anybody who is upset in the Republican Party about this, they haven't been to New Jersey. Come see the destruction, come see the loss."

###

GOVERNOR ROMNEY IN PENNSYLVANIA

Romney praises Gov. Christie's 'heart and passion'

Steve Peoples

Associated Press

Mitt Romney is praising New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's response to Hurricane Sandy.

The Republican presidential candidate told supporters in Pennsylvania Sunday night that Christie is giving "all of his heart and his passion" to help his state recover from the storm that wreaked havoc along the East Coast last week.

President Barack Obama visited New Jersey storm victims with Christie last week. The New Jersey governor publicly praised the president's leadership after the disaster, but on Sunday he said he still intended to vote for Romney.

Romney did not praise Obama but thanked "the governors that are dealing with this tragedy."

The Republican candidate made his comments at an evening rally in eastern Pennsylvania, along the New Jersey border.

###

Romney gives Christie a shout-out

Maggie Haberman

Politico – Burns & Haberman

Via POLITICO's James Hohmann, Mitt Romney gave a shoutout to Gov. Chris Christie at a frigid rally in Pennsylvania:

"Thanks also to the governor that are dealing with this tragedy, particularly I think about the governor of New Jersey, Governor Christie. He's giving it his all and his heart and his passion to help the people of his state. They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work. Thank you, governor."

Discussing Sandy has not been routine for Romney the last two days, but Pennsylvania is one of the states hit by the storm, and is adjacent to Jersey.

The unsubtle message - no hard feelings for the praising of President Obama for how he handled the storm, and a reminder to the crowd that Christie, who's also gotten kudos for how he's dealt with the aftermath, is a Romney backer.

###

Romney Overlooks Christie's Praise for Obama

Michael Barbaro

New York Times – The Caucus

Gov. Chris Christie's lavish praise for President Obama in the days since Hurricane Sandy has raised eyebrows across the Republican establishment.

Mitt Romney had a message of his own on Sunday night: It does not bother him.

Not publicly, anyway.

At a rally here, Mr. Romney seemed determined to play down any hint of tension between his campaign and Mr. Christie, the New Jersey governor, whose kind words have given the president an unexpected bipartisan credential in the final days of the campaign.

"He's giving it all of his heart and his passion to help the people of his state," Mr. Romney said. "They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work. Thank you, governor."

Mr. Romney drew a giant crowd of about 25,000, among his largest of the year. Despite polls showing an Obama lead in Pennsylvania, Mr. Romney predicted victory there.

"The people of America understand we're taking back the White House because we're going to win Pennsylvania," he said in Morrisville, near the New Jersey border.

Mr. Romney ran about an hour late, prompting hundreds of people who had stood out in the cold for hours to ask security officials to let them leave while Mr. Romney was still speaking.

After some negotiations, the Secret Service allowed them to leave.

"It's just too cold," said Rob Boyson, who walked out just as Mr. Romney was asking the audience, as he does at most rallies: "I want you to walk with me. Let's walk together. We're taking back America."

###

Romney praises Christie disaster response

Rachel Streitfeld

CNN Political Ticker

If Mitt Romney is upset with Gov. Chris Christie for praising President Obama, he didn't show it Sunday night.

In fact, the GOP presidential candidate singled out the fiery New Jersey governor in a speech to 25,000 outside

Philadelphia, lauding Christie's response to Superstorm Sandy.

"He's giving it all of his heart and his passion to help the people of his state," Romney said. "They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work. Thank you, governor."

Christie made waves among the political class with his effusive praise of the president's handling of disaster relief.

Earlier Sunday, a senior Romney adviser brushed off questions about whether the storm - which prompted both candidates to cancel events with only a week left in the race - had stalled the campaign's momentum.

"I don't look at what happened with the storm and how it affected so many people through a political lens," said adviser Kevin Madden. "Instead, we are focused on what we can do to make sure that the enthusiasm that we have seen in states, that it's part of helping our get out the vote efforts in all these key battlegrounds and then just focusing on the message."

Romney's Pennsylvania rally - one of his largest events of the campaign - was the third of three stops the Republican candidate made Sunday.

He planned a four-state blitz Monday, with stops in Florida, Virginia, Ohio and New Hampshire.

###

Romney praises Christie for storm response

Chris Laible
Fox News

Mitt Romney expressed gratitude Sunday night for strong leadership in areas still reeling from Monster Storm Sandy, singling out New Jersey Governor Chris Christie for "his hard work" during the recovery effort.

Over the past week, the normally bombastic Christie has been grieving over the tragedy that struck his state. He has spent long hours consoling those affected by the storm while heading the relief and recovery effort -- something the Republican presidential nominee has taken note of.

"He's giving it his all and his heart and his passion to help the people of his state," Romney said of Christie during a rally in neighboring Pennsylvania. "They're in a hard way, and we appreciate his hard work."

Christie caused a political maelstrom last week with his effusive praise of President Obama's handling of the disaster following a joint tour of the damage Wednesday.

Asked about the compliments, Christie bristled at the accusation he was turning his back on his party.

"I'm a Republican and I have endorsed Mitt Romney, I support him and I intend to vote for him on Tuesday," he said during an interview. "If the president of United States comes here and he's willing to help my people and he does it then I'm gonna say nice things about him because he's earned it."

In Morrisville, Romney went on to express empathy for those affected by the storm and encouraged the 25,000 supporters who attended to contribute in any way possible.

"Our hearts go out to you," Romney said. "If you have some extra funds that you can provide to people, please contact the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army or any other groups that are helping provide care for those that are having a tough time."

Hurricane Sandy devastated portions of the Northeast last week, leaving millions without power. Hardest hit were the idyllic shore towns along New Jersey's coast as well as New York City, where the storm crippled the usually bustling metropolis.

Romney canceled all of his planned events as the storm blew ashore, and held a storm relief event outside Dayton, Ohio last Tuesday to help the millions affected.

However, his words on the storm were his first in nearly two days as the charged rhetoric of campaigning replaced words of condolence.

###

ELECTIONS

Lt. Gov: N.J. officials working to make sure Sandy victims can vote

MaryAnn Spoto
Star-Ledger

Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno said the Christie administration is doing all it can to ensure victims of Hurricane Sandy will get to vote by Tuesday's election.

With many Sandy victims saying voting isn't high on their list of priorities, Guadagno said several laws have been suspended to accommodate those who can't get to polling places or whose places have been damaged or left without power.

Any registered voter can cast a ballot by email or fax by 8 p.m.. Tuesday — a system already used by troops and residents living overseas — or they can call 1-877-NJVOTE.

Lt Governor Announces Displaced Voter Plans Lt Governor Announces Displaced Voter Plans Lt. Governor and Secretary of State Kim Guadagno announces she signed an order allowing displaced voters to vote by email or fax. Watch video

First responders who can't get home to vote can go to a county clerk's office or call that number. An order signed by Guadagno, who is also the Secretary of State overseeing elections, extended the time for mail-in ballots to be counted.

If fax or email isn't an option, a displaced resident or first responder can vote at any polling place provisionally on Tuesday.

"We encourage you to go out and vote," Guadagno said. "It is one of the ways we will get back to normal."

By today, 305 of the state's 3,000 polling places were either without power or badly damaged, down from a high of 900, her office said.

###

Half of polling places knocked out by Sandy restored

Salvador Rizzo
Star-Ledger

More than half of the polling places knocked out by Hurricane Sandy have been restored, but the counties where the storm hit hardest still have 300 places out of commission, state officials announced today.

"Since the storm's impact, more than 500 polling places that had lacked power or were inaccessible will now again be able to serve as a polling location," Ernest Landante, a spokesman for Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno, said today. "As power continues to be restored, we expect more polling places to become usable."

Sandy swallowed up or blew out the lights at more than 800 polling places — one-quarter of the approximately 3,000 locations across New Jersey — and officials from both parties were in overdrive today scrambling to give citizens enough alternatives to cast their ballots on Tuesday.

Guadagno — who as secretary of state is New Jersey's top election official — announced that the National Guard will set up mobile voting booths in disaster areas, and on Saturday authorized displaced New Jerseyans to fax in or email their ballots by 8 p.m. on Tuesday.

Assemblyman John Wisniewski, chairman of the state Democratic Party, said those measures have bipartisan backing.

"The lieutenant governor's office is working with the two state party committees and the two U.S. Senate campaigns to try and have consensus on this process, and what I've described to you is a consensus among all the parties," he said.

Landante said two of the most devastated counties had the biggest drop in polling locations. Hudson and Ocean counties each are down by 100 polling places. Middlesex County is down by 50, Essex County by 25, Union County by 17, Somerset County by 10 and Monmouth County has lost two.

"Counties are working to either consolidate or find new locations for 305 polling places," Landante said.

Guadagno also ordered county clerk's offices to remain open through the weekend for early voting. Hundreds of residents packed into those buildings today, waiting for hours in a logjam to cast their votes.

"They got six people typing in information, and there must be 400 people waiting in line here on three floors," said Willie Rowe, 58, a Newark resident clocking in his second hour in line at the Essex County Hall of Records. "If I have to be, I'll be here all day."

In the Ocean County administrative building in Toms River, the line was more than 100 people deep on the second floor — and that's just a holding area before voters are filtered on to the first floor.

"Nothing's perfect," said Wisniewski. "We're dealing with an unprecedented situation."

There are some concerns about safeguarding the election's integrity with so many emergency measures involved.

A wide publicity effort will be needed to reassure confused citizens about voting at military booths, Wisniewski said, and some deadlines for mailing in ballots may need to be relaxed so that voters aren't accidentally disenfranchised.

"If you have a military presence at a polling place, some voters might be intimidated," he said. "And the protocol of postmarking mail is not necessarily uniform throughout the postal system. It is conceivable that a voter dropped a ballot Friday. ... What if doesn't get stamped until after Election Day?"

One expert said electronic voting comes with extensive risks.

"Email accounts get hacked all the time. Just last week, my brother-in-law's email account was compromised," said Avi Rubin, a Johns Hopkins University professor and technical director of its Information Security Institute. "If you receive email or fax, you have absolutely no guarantee as to the source of those communications. Email is trivial to forge, and faxes can be spoofed as well."

Wisniewski acknowledged the concern but said state and county officials won't count an electronic vote unless they also receive a hard copy of their ballot in the mail.

"There is always a concern that there are bad actors," he said. "But there is a hammer, if you will, for people who try to misuse that. Somebody will be coming to check up."

###

Thousands of Bergen, Passaic voters seize the chance to vote early

John C. Ensslin
The Record

Finally there was a long line in Bergen County that did not involve gasoline.

This line formed outside the County Administration Building in Hackensack on Sunday, where a steady stream of more than 1,700 registered voters filed in to vote early.

"We had lines out the door," said Bergen County Clerk John Hogan. "It was like something we've never seen in an election before."

Because of disruption caused last week in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, the clerk's offices in Bergen and Passaic maintained extended hours over the weekend where voters applied for absentee mail-in ballots they could fill out and submit immediately.

Passaic County Clerk Kristin Corrado reported that her office processed about 800 absentee ballot applications

on Sunday.

"We had a line out the door starting at 8:30 and continued throughout the entire day," she said.

The deluge of voters came as the election officials worked to finalize which polling places for Tuesday's election have to be moved because of the storm.

In Bergen County, elections officials put the finishing touches on their list Sunday. The list — which has been a moving target all weekend — restored some of the polling places that were among the 152 that initially were slated to be moved late last week because the lingering power outages and damage caused by Hurricane Sandy.

"It's been a grueling few days but I think we're ready," said Eileen DiBari, chairwoman of the Board of Elections.

The latest list of the Bergen County polling places can be found at: <http://blog.northjersey.com/bergenbeat/>.

Passaic County election officials meanwhile took a different approach. They plan to announce their final list of polling places today after evaluating which locations had power restored over the weekend. That list can be found at passaiccountynj.org.

Another unprecedented part of voting this year is that registered voters who were displaced by Sandy will be allowed to vote by fax and email.

To vote electronically, voters must email or fax their mail-in ballot applications to their county clerk's office. If the application is approved, the clerk will then send the ballot by fax or email to the voter. The ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. on Nov. 6.

The directive, announced late Saturday by Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno, also is intended to help first responders who are assisting with recovery efforts and may be away from home on Election Day.

Hogan said his office has received some requests for electronic ballots and has set up a process where the signatures of people applying electronically to vote are compared with signatures on file with his office. But he added that his office is taking people on their word when they say they've been displaced by the storm.

"I haven't seen anything that looks improper up to this point," Hogan said. "Under these conditions — which have never been seen before when anyone is looking to vote, — they should have the ability to vote."

With New Jerseyans voting by paper ballot, email or fax, Governor Christie said he did not know how long it will take to count all the votes — though he did think it could add some suspense to the state's elections.

The governor promised to prosecute anyone who tries to take advantage of the state's unorthodox voting methods.

"If there are people who decide to vote fraudulently, they'd better hope they don't get caught," Christie said at a press conference with Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano on Sunday.

Christie, half-jokingly, promised, "There will be no more voter fraud in New Jersey than there usually is," drawing laughs from the Hoboken crowd.

####

GAS RATIONING SYSTEM

Long gas lines remain in most of NJ, but drivers coping with waits, gas rationing rules
Associated Press

Long lines remained the norm at many gas stations in central and northern New Jersey on Sunday, but motorists said their concerns over fuel were easing as more stations resumed operations across the state.

Most drivers also seemed to be coping with the gas-rationing system imposed by Gov. Chris Christie in 12 of the state's 21 counties, though many questioned whether it was needed. And numerous drivers admitted they were traveling to counties where the restrictions were not in place to get their gas.

Under the rationing system, drivers with license plates ending in an even number can buy gas on even-numbered days, and those with plates ending in an odd number on odd-numbered days. Drivers with vanity plates that have no numbers can buy gas on odd-numbered days.

Overall, it seemed that the further south motorists were able to drive, the easier it was to get gas.

At a Lukoil station in Lakewood, there were no lines early Sunday afternoon, although station manager Syed Uddin said customers had been waiting 30-40 minutes on Sunday morning.

The station was closed Saturday because it ran out of gas Friday. The station sold 15,000 gallons that day — five times what it sells on a typical day, Uddin said.

Some customers were even defying New Jersey's longstanding law against self-pumping, although Uddin said he was not granting permission to do so. "People, they don't listen," he said.

Lew Thompson of Toms River was pumping his own gas into two plastic canisters so he could power his generator.

"Makes it a little quicker," Thompson said of self-service. "Like the governor said, sometimes you've got to cut through the bureaucracy and get it done."

Lakewood is at the northern end of Ocean County, which meant gas rationing was not in effect as it was in Monmouth County, just a few miles away. Many drivers were heading south to avoid the restrictions.

"The hysteria up there is not worth it," said Bob Rooney of Red Bank.

###

Gas lines shorten, tempers ease

Rebecca Baker, Matthew McGrath and Michael Linhorst
The Record

The second day of statewide gas rationing appeared to make a difference Sunday with waits for fuel taking less time than they were last week.

A sampling throughout Bergen and Passaic counties showed lines were routinely a quarter- to a half-mile long. A few weeks ago, that would have seemed unthinkable — but compared with the 2-mile-long lines that were routine last week, Sunday's waits were a relief.

"The lines are much shorter and the tempers are much better," said Bergen County Prosecutor John Molinelli, who said he visited a few stations where officers were on patrol.

The rationing, put in place on Saturday, allows only drivers whose license plates' final number is odd to buy gas on odd-numbered days, and those with plates whose final number is even to fuel up on even days. The restriction only applies to passenger vehicles.

While there were still some stations with long lines on Sunday, people who visited the Hess on Route 17 south in Paramus were able to pull or walk right up to the pump.

"It looks like this gas thing is lightening up," said Arthur Lehr of Lodi as he filled up a pair of cans and his van. "This was a little more calm than the gas shortage in the '70s. I heard some stories of people getting into fights, but it wasn't like the gas shortage in the '70s."

Lou Cordero of Passaic seemed to agree as he filled up cans to put in his pair of Jeep Wranglers — both with odd-numbered plates — so he and his wife could make their morning commutes.

"It's getting better today," he said. "It really is."

Julius Simon of Paterson wished he could have brought more than four gas containers, but that's all he could find.

"These last three days ... I'd fill up one can and a couple hours later it was gone."

No one seems to know when gas stations without power or stations with power but no gas will get what they need. Governor Christie didn't give an estimate Sunday on when the rationing program might end.

"I think this is going to be relatively short," he said at a press conference in Hoboken. But the rationing may need to be extended if a nor'easter forecast to hit the state in the middle of the week disrupts fuel distribution, he said.

Sal Risalvato, executive director of the New Jersey Gasoline C-Store Automotive Association, said 80 percent of fueling stations in North Jersey either have no gas or no electricity — the same statistic he gave on Thursday.

Risalvato said fuel was en route Sunday morning to National Guard armories in the region to fill tanker trucks that will bring the fuel to stations with power but no gas. He declined to say how much fuel was being delivered, but said members of Christie's office told him Sunday that Bergen County was on the list of "critical" areas where gas shipments and power restoration are a priority.

"They are promising to prioritize gas stations so they can sell the inventory in the ground," he said. "Those who have had power are running out of gas."

Christie said the state's gasoline problem is not a fuel shortage. There is plenty of gas, he said, but power outages have prevented it from being distributed to where it is needed.

Now that power is being restored, distribution should improve soon, Christie said.

Christie urged gas stations that can operate with generators to do so but acknowledged some private stations don't have that option. "Some of them just aren't built for it," he said.

A majority of Hess stations around New Jersey have been using generators to remain open, a company spokeswoman said. Meanwhile, Hess is posting a list of open gas stations online at hessexpress.com/FuelInformation and highlighted ones with more than 7,000 gallons of fuel.

In North Jersey on Sunday, the list included stations in Fort Lee on Route 46 and Route 4, in Orange on Central Avenue, in Paramus on Route 17 south, in Ramsey on Route 17 north, in Rockaway on Route 46 and in Secaucus in Route 3 west. All but the station in Orange had more than 10,000 gallons available. Stations with less than 5,000 gallons will run out of fuel in less than two hours, according to the website.

Another website, gasbuddy.com/sandy, lists open and closed stations by entering a city, state or ZIP code, but most of the stations were listed as "unknown."

But while rationing continues, some drivers are finding creative ways around the rules.

On Sunday afternoon, three different people parked their cars at Super Foodtown on Route 23, grabbed a gas can and walked across Packanack Lake Road to an Exxon station, where they filled up the cans, then walked back to fuel up their cars in the parking lot.

Molinelli said he received a report Saturday that a motorist was switching license plates on the side of Route 17. While he doesn't believe plate-switching is widespread, he put police departments on notice to be on the lookout for tampered plates.

Anyone whose car and registration doesn't match their license plate will get a summons for operating a vehicle with fictitious plates, the prosecutor said.

"There is zero tolerance for any violation of the governor's order," he said.

The gas rationing also triggered some questionable ethical behavior. The governor criticized people "hoarding" gas — filling up when they already have enough to get by — but said there was nothing he could do to stop it.

"If people are going to be selfish, then they've got to deal with their own conscience," he said.

Mahwah police also received a report Saturday night that two men were selling gas for \$8 a gallon from the back of a pickup truck near the Valero Station on Route 17 south, police said. Police found nothing suspicious when

they arrived.

A Teaneck man received seven citations Saturday after Wayne police found he was carrying a 300-gallon drum in a pickup truck. The man was cited for placing injurious substances on a highway, operating a vehicle in an unsafe condition, and other violations

Police had responded to reports that the man was selling gasoline from the back of the pickup, but the man told officers that he had brought the fuel to a friend who lives in the area, an account that was confirmed by the friend.

Police said a crowd had formed and started suggesting they would pay for the gas if he would sell it to them.

###

N.J. sees more gas flowing, but long lines persist a week after Sandy

Craig Wolff
Star-Ledger

The long silvery tankers that haul gasoline around New Jersey are accustomed to clockwork routine:

Ten to 15 minutes waiting at a fuel terminal; 10 minutes under the loading "rack;" then a trip to a local gas station. In normal times, the whole process typically takes no more than 90 minutes, and usually much less. Hurricane Sandy, though, upset that routine, in turn adding more complexity to what had been a humdrum chore for motorists — filling up their car's gas tank.

Today, as more gas stations in the state returned to full power, there were accounts from relieved drivers of waits under a half-hour.

Many credited Gov. Chris Christie's creation of a system that divides cars based on license plate numbers and the day of the month. The governor today also signed an executive order that permits gas companies to deliver to gas stations that carry a different brand.

Still, availability remained scattershot, county by county, town by town. In many parts of the state, wrap-around-the-corner lines and distant detours for a working pump persisted.

The truck drivers who deliver the gas to the stations can relate to the ordeal, according to the head of the state retail association that represents gas station owners.

They, too, have been forced to go far out of their way and to endure long waits, said Sal Risalvato, executive director of the New Jersey Gasoline-C-Store-Automotive Association.

That holds especially for truckers working in the northern part of the state, where most of the distribution terminals, including those in Carteret, Perth Amboy and Linden, which supply the bulk of the gas in North Jersey, lost power with the start of the storm, and only a few are back in business, he said.

DETOURS AND DELAYS

The gas haulers — which carry 8,500 gallons of fuel — were being shunted to terminals near the Delaware River, making the gas delivery chain more sluggish, Risalvato said. That meant about a three-hour round trip for those haulers, plus perhaps a two-hour wait just to load their tanks.

Additionally, of 2,400 stations in the state, more than half continued to be without power as of late this afternoon, according to Risalvato.

"I expected that, by tonight, this thing would have eased considerably," Risalvato said. "I've seen an uptick, but it hasn't happened as much as I hoped or expected."

Today, drivers continued to take part in an odd version of telephone tag, spreading the latest information in texts, and in the Twitter and Facebook worlds.

Tracking the buzz was an elusive task, because often, as soon as word got out on the stations with waits that were actually under an hour, those stations became overrun, motorists said.

The situation seemed to improve as the day went on today.

In the morning, drivers reported a 30-minute wait at the Sunoco station at Route 22 and Gaston Avenue in Somerville. Tonight, there were accounts of 10-minute waits in Elizabeth.

On the walkup line for people filling canisters at the Exxon station on Prospect Avenue in West Orange this afternoon, Gordon Hill said he had been forced to abandon his Mazda pickup truck after running out of gas.

Waiting nearby in her car, Melody Tuffuor said that filling up had practically become a daily ritual. She had brought her husband's car to the same station Saturday.

She said she passed the time playing games on her iPhone, adding that people were wary of cars trying to cut in.

"It's not pretty, everybody is watching you," she said.

###

While Fuel Is Promised, Drivers Wait Hours for Gas

Winnie Hu and Vivian Yee
New York Times

As long lines persisted at pumps across the region, government officials and gas station owners in New York and New Jersey said Sunday that the fuel shortage could last for several more days as stations struggled to maintain supplies or reopen after losing power.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo reported that tankers and barges laden with fuel were en route to New York-area ports, but he also called on drivers to help by staying off the roads. "Now is not the time to be using the car, if you don't need to," he said at a news briefing. "Now is not the time to be hoarding fuel," he added.

On Long Island, the Northville fuel distribution terminal at Port Jefferson was scheduled to get up to nine million gallons of gasoline by the end of Monday, according to state officials. A second Long Island terminal, in Inwood, was also open and ready to accept deliveries, the officials said.

The federal Energy Department said Sunday that only 27 percent of gas stations in the New York area reported being out of gas, down from 67 percent on Friday. The improvement was attributed to the continued restoration of power to the area and the reopening of the Port of New York and New Jersey and other pipelines and terminals handling fuel delivery. The Defense Department also started delivering fuel over the weekend.

"Things are getting a little better, not tremendously," said Kevin Beyer, president of the Long Island Gasoline Retailers Association. Mr. Beyer's own gas station in Smithtown, N.Y., reopened Saturday after electricity was restored. "It's going to be a long process," he said.

In New Jersey, where Gov. Chris Christie has imposed a rationing system limiting gas sales to even-numbered license plates on even days, and odd-numbered license plates on odd days, lines were noticeably shorter in some places, including Essex County, though many stations remained closed around the state.

Near Newark Liberty Airport, Javier Nazario, 36, a school principal, said he stood in line with dozens of people to fill up a five-gallon container for his car, which was parked in front of his house with an empty tank. After two hours, and with two people ahead of him, the station ran out.

Mr. Nazario said that one man had helped deplete the supply by filling a 25-gallon container with \$101 worth of gas. "I don't know what he's trying to power," Mr. Nazario said. "But I think folks should pretty much just take what they need for their vehicle, otherwise the ration doesn't have its effect."

He finally found gas at another station — after four more hours in line. The story was the same at many stations: long waits, uncertain results. Even stations that were tapped out found that people kept coming.

In New Dorp on Staten Island, Cassie Arizmendy, 23, said she had been waiting in line at a Hess station for more than 17 hours by Sunday afternoon for the next delivery of gas. "I'm here and I'm not leaving because I'm in the front," said Ms. Arizmendy, who wore pajamas under her coat.

In Westchester County on Sunday, a Mobil station reopened in Larchmont after receiving a delivery of 5,000 gallons from a distributor in Newburgh, N.Y., less than half of its normal delivery, the owner said. The line — cash-only with a \$40 limit — was four blocks long and had a police officer directing customers.

"I lived through the 1970s so I've been there," said Rainor Sick, 69, who spent a half-hour waiting to fill up.

At a Getty station in Pelham Manor, in Westchester, the owner, Dave Randhawa, stood outside telling drivers that he had nothing left after selling about 8,000 gallons in the two previous days. He said there had only been one minor confrontation, when a woman who said her car had run out of gas tried to jump the line.

"I was told it will come today but I doubt it," he told one woman in a van that rolled up.

###

NEW JERSEY RECOVERY

Utility crews making progress restoring power to New Jerseyans

Associated Press

Utility crews are making progress restoring electricity in New Jersey one week after Sandy downed trees and power lines and flooded substations.

There are 779,571 homes and businesses without service.

Public Service Electric & Gas says it has restored power to about 78 percent of its customers that have been without electricity. Another 375,000 are still waiting.

Jersey Central Power & Light is reporting 382,036 outages, mainly in Monmouth County. JCP&L says most should be back by Wednesday.

Orange & Rockland has 21,949 without service, mainly in Bergen County.

Atlantic City Electric has whittled the number down to 586, mostly in Atlantic County.

###

Number of N.J. customers without power post-Sandy falls below 1M

Ed Beeson
Star-Ledger

New Jersey's utilities crossed a collective milestone today.

Fewer than 1 million customers were without power tonight, according to data released by the four utility companies servicing the state. While still a significant number, that's down from the 1.2 million utilities said were without power as of Saturday night, and the 2.7 million left in the dark a week ago when Hurricane Sandy struck.

Among those getting power back were schools, gas stations and polling places. Public Service Electric & Gas, the state's largest utility, said it has restored power to about 80 percent of the schools, 3,000 polling stations and about 78 percent of the gas stations in its service area.

"We hope to make a real good dent in that over the next few days," Ralph LaRossa, president and chief operating officer of PSE&G, told reporters during a conference call today.

Overall, the company had restored power to 1.2 million of the 1.7 million homes and businesses knocked out during the storm, and said it was on track to restore power to 100,000 more in the next 24 hours. LaRossa noted that PSE&G's restoration effort has far outpaced its performance during last year's October snowstorm, in which it took eight days to return power to 872,000 customers.

Jersey Central Power & Light reported about 430,000 were without power as of 5:30 p.m. today, most of which were in hard-hit Monmouth and Ocean counties. That's down from about 570,000 who were out late Saturday

afternoon. Ron Morano, a JCP&L spokesman, didn't have estimates on the schools, polling centers and gas stations that have had power returned, but said the utility has compiled lists of these sites.

Atlantic City Electric was on track to restore power to all customers who are able to safely receive electricity, spokeswoman Lendel Jones said. New York-based utility Orange and Rockland, which services Bergen, Passaic and Sussex counties, had just over 30,000 customers without power tonight, down from about 38,000 Saturday night.

But as utilities raced to repair downed lines and damaged substations, they also face another challenge in the coming days: a brewing nor'easter expected to hit on Wednesday. It was unclear today how the coming storm could impact the utilities' repair efforts. Officials for PSE&G and JCP&L said it was too early to tell, and wouldn't speculate to what extent homes could be plunged back into powerless states after this week.

"(We) expect the majority of our customers from the hurricane to be restored by then and will respond to any outages from this new storm with all available resources," said PSE&G spokeswoman Karen Johnson.

Orange & Rockland spokesman Mike Donovan said the company's crews will work in winds that reach up to 40 mph. "If it become a safety issue, we'll pull crews off the road," he said, adding he recalls that happening only about a half-dozen times in the past 20 years.

###

Forecasters tracking another coastal storm that threatens Sandy cleanup in NJ

Associated Press

Forecasters are tracking another coastal storm that threatens cleanup and recovery efforts from Sandy in New Jersey.

The National Weather Service says the nor'easter could hit the region on Wednesday into Thursday.

The storm could produce strong winds, heavy rain and cause moderate tidal flooding along the coast, Raritan Bay and lower Delaware Bay.

Buildings and trees weakened by Sandy would be vulnerable to additional damage.

The storm would also hamper efforts to restore electricity that was lost during Sandy.

###

Officials: Long Beach Island residents will be able to briefly return home on Monday

Associated Press

Long Beach Island residents will be able to briefly return to their homes Monday.

The island was severely damaged when megastorm Sandy crashed into the Jersey shore, and residents have been kept away ever since.

Officials say residents will be allowed in from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. But there will be no access for homes in Holgate and North Beach, due to unsafe conditions in those areas.

To gain entry to the island, residents will have to show a re-entry placard, a driver's license or proof of residence, such as a tax bill. Nonresidents and those who do not have proper residence documentation will not be granted entry.

Only one vehicle per residence will be allowed to enter the island, and no children under 12 or pets are permitted.

###

Sandy's Blackouts Fall to 1.9 Million; New Jersey Worst Affected

Jim Polson and Mark Chediak

Bloomberg

Utility crews working around the clock restored power to another 640,000 homes and businesses since Nov. 3, with New Jersey making up more than half of the 1.9 million still without electricity.

By the sixth day after Hurricane Sandy struck, power companies had brought back the lights to 78 percent of the 8.5 million customers who lost it in the storm's destructive path. State officials voiced approval of the work accomplished, which included restoring power to most of Manhattan, while renewing warnings that utilities' response to the crisis is being closely watched by regulators and lawmakers.

"I want to make sure from a consumer's point of view the power is back up as quickly as possible and that these companies are doing all that they can do," New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, said Nov. 3. "These are utilities that are regulated by the state, and consumers have the right to hold them accountable."

Recovery progressed slowly in New Jersey, where Sandy came ashore near Atlantic City at 8 p.m. Oct. 29. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, a Republican, praised the "patience and resilience" of New Jerseyans and released a timeline yesterday of which neighborhoods should be restored over the next few days. He pledged to hold utilities to the schedule.

Growing Frustration

"While progress has been made in restoring power to many businesses, households and critical infrastructure in the aftermath of Sandy, there are still over 1.25 million customers without power," Christie said in a statement Nov. 3. By today, New Jersey's power losses dropped to 999,927, according to the Energy Department.

Frustration grew among consumers, many also without water, heat or phone service, as power companies advised that some areas may not get electricity back for another two weeks. A cold front is forecast to bring rain and possibly snow to the Northeast this week.

As of 2 p.m. Eastern time Nov. 4, 25 percent of homes and businesses in New Jersey, 8 percent of those in New York and 4 percent in Connecticut and West Virginia remained without electricity, according to the Department of Energy.

Barry Nydick, 74, and his wife, Marji, have been without electricity since the first day of the storm when a tree fell down and severed the wires running into their Livingston, New Jersey, home.

No Bets

"I wouldn't place a dollar bet on when I'm getting my power back," Nydick said. Nydick and his wife have taken refuge with friends in Rockaway, New Jersey, until their power is restored. He worries about some of his neighbors who had no choice but to remain at home in the dark.

"It's getting cold here and if it takes another week to get the power back, that's a lot of suffering," Nydick said.

Utilities are taking longer to assess damage and make repairs because the extent of damage from Sandy far exceeds the destruction caused by last year's Hurricane Irene, said Brian Wolff, a senior vice president of the Edison Electric Institute, a Washington-based group representing publicly traded power companies. Restoration efforts are complicated by the widespread flooding damage caused as Sandy swamped parts of Manhattan and New Jersey with corrosive saltwater.

Sandy, one of the costliest storms in U.S. history, wrought the greatest devastation ever faced by the region's power industry, Wolff said. Electricity had been restored to 4.6 million customers as of Nov. 2, or about 57 percent of those blacked out, compared with 74 percent at the same stage of cleanup for Irene, which also hit the East Coast, according to data from the U.S. Energy Department analyzed by Bloomberg.

Revoking Licenses

New York Governor Cuomo wrote a letter to the state's seven utilities last week warning he'd revoke their operating certificates if their restoration efforts fall short.

"Let's see what the performance is and then we'll have judgment," he said Nov. 3. "I'm very happy we've done so well in Manhattan. I'm also worried about Queens, and I'm also worried about Brooklyn and I'm also worried about the Bronx and Staten Island and Long Island and Rockland and Westchester."

Consolidated Edison Inc. (ED), owner of New York City's utility, restored power to the majority of buildings in Lower Manhattan Nov. 3 after it was inundated by a record 14-foot tide from the storm. The utility said Manhattan's networks remain "in a precarious situation."

Con Edison has restored service to about 80 percent of its customers who lost power in the storm. About 180,000 of its customers in New York City and Westchester County remained without service as of 10 p.m. local time yesterday, it said.

Westchester County

Getting power back to all customers in Westchester, where blocked roads hamper repairs, may take until Nov. 10, Con Edison said. The company's suburban Orange & Rockland unit, as well as utilities in New Jersey and Connecticut, issued similar forecasts.

"From what we've seen, Con Ed is doing as much work as they possibly can safely," New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, owner of Bloomberg LP, the parent of Bloomberg News, said at a Nov. 2 press conference. "They didn't expect, and I don't think anyone else did either, a surge this high."

Bloomberg's patience did not extend to the Rockaways portion of Queens, where fire destroyed 111 homes in Breezy Point at the height of the storm. Unlike most of New York City, which gets its power from Con Edison, the Rockaway peninsula is served by the Long Island Power Authority.

LIPA Estimates

LIPA's assessment that it may take two weeks to restore power to the Rockaways is "unacceptable," Bloomberg said. About 275,000 LIPA customers remained without power as of 10 p.m. local time yesterday, the utility said in a statement. More than a quarter of those may be too severely damaged to accept power, it said.

Flooding forced Con Edison to pre-emptively cut power to large swaths of New York for the first time in its history, ripped out chunks of Atlantic City's famed boardwalk and submerged coastal communities in New Jersey.

FirstEnergy Corp. (FE)'s Jersey Central Power & Light, which served many of the shoreline communities battered by the storm, said Nov. 2 that the majority of the utility's 1.1 million customers would have power back by Nov. 7. Those in hardest-hit areas would have to wait as long as 14 days for electricity, while the rest would regain service "once damaged roads, infrastructure and homes are rebuilt."

Jersey Central

Jersey Central reported 407,039 of the more than 1 million customers who lost power are still without it as of 11:09 p.m. local time yesterday. Public Service (PEG), which also serves New Jersey, had 439,000 customers still without power as of a 9 p.m. statement yesterday. The utility said "virtually all" of those who had lost power would be back online within the next week to 10 days.

Northeast Utilities (NU), owner of Connecticut Light & Power, estimates most of its customers will have electricity back by Nov. 6, said Frank Poirot, a spokesman for the company. UIL Holdings Corp. (UIL)'s United Illuminating will restore electricity to 95 percent of its customers by the end of today, according to a statement.

###

Taxpayer Storm Shield Protects Casinos While Poor Take on Water

Michael C. Bender and Chris Strohm
Bloomberg

As superstorm Sandy flooded Atlantic City, New Jersey, one area was shielded from damage by dunes constructed at taxpayer expense: casinos and other beachfront businesses and homes.

Nearby, another set of residents didn't get government-paid storm defense. In one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, water from Absecon Inlet crested onto streets, flooding homes and businesses.

What unfolded in this East Coast resort city of 40,000, the second-largest U.S. gambling market behind Las Vegas, shows how government decisions helped businesses escape almost unscathed and open just days after the storm, while people living paycheck to paycheck suffered.

"The government has protected their cash cow, the casinos, at the expense of the people," said Edsel Coates, 57, whose home near the inlet flooded and roof caved in. "The casinos are receiving preferential treatment and there's neglect of the average Atlantic City resident."

Decisions about which projects are completed -- and where -- get made based on availability of funding, public support and the type of erosion that occurred in the past, said Larry Hajna, a spokesman for the state environmental department.

'Endless Pool'

"We don't have an endless pool of money to just do the entire coast at once," he said.

Atlantic City, whose streets are memorialized in the board game Monopoly, is home to 12 casinos that help attract 30 million visitors annually, according to the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism. Gambling revenue in the city reached \$3.3 billion in 2011, down 37 percent from a peak of \$5.2 billion in 2006, the same year Pennsylvania's first slots parlor opened, according to state data.

Atlantic City's casinos have been central to Republican Governor Chris Christie's economic revival strategy since he took office in January 2010. Christie's plan includes a \$20 million "Do AC" marketing campaign, tax breaks for developers and state oversight of policing and cleanup.

New Jersey's oceanfront communities were among the hardest hit by the Oct. 29 storm, which mangled boardwalks and leveled vacation homes along the state's 127-mile (204-kilometer) coastline.

At least 24 people died in New Jersey, according to the state police. In Atlantic City, part of a barrier island, one person perished in the storm, from a heart attack, police said.

Poorest Neighborhoods

About three quarters of Atlantic City suffered flooding, said Dennis Brooks, the fire chief. About 25 percent of the city's residents live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census, compared with about 9.1 percent statewide.

Areas with minimal damage are along a 5.1-mile stretch of beach where contractors this year finished an \$18 million replenishment program with funding from federal, state and local governments.

The state said in a March news release that the project would protect "vital tourist communities from the effects of extreme weather." It included the reconstruction of beaches and dunes.

Along the protected area, the Trump Taj Mahal, Showboat and other casinos survived the largest tropical system in the Atlantic in part because of the program, which also included \$22 million worth of additional sand in 2004, said Stephen Rochette, spokesman for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which oversaw the work.

Hardest Hit

One of the neighborhoods hardest hit is near the inlet, which leads from the Atlantic, along the edge of the city, said Brooks.

Some of the city's poorest residents, many of whom are black or Hispanic, live in the neighborhood near the inlet, said Linda Steele, president of the Atlantic City chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The neighborhood also includes vacant lots and more expensive housing.

To protect that area from storm damage, the Corps called in 1996 for building about 1,600 feet of bulkhead in two sections along the inlet, which would tie into existing ones.

The new bulkhead wasn't constructed as part of the beach project because of a lack of money and because the state didn't have real estate easements from landowners, said Rochette.

Required Easements

Hajna, the spokesman for the state environment department, said the Army Corps specified only this summer what easements were required. The state secured a pledge for easements from Atlantic City and was working on easements with three private landowners when Sandy struck, he said.

"The storm hit before that project could be built," said Hanja, who declined to respond directly to the criticism that the government didn't do enough to help low-income residents. "I'm going to leave it at that."

The wall will be built to a height that probably would have withstood Sandy's surge, said William England, Atlantic City's engineer, in an interview.

"It would have had a very positive effect in mitigating any damage," England said. "Would it have been the cure-all and prevented all the damage? I don't think so."

Funding was approved this year for a 1,100-foot section of bulkhead, said Rochette. It will rise about 16 feet above sea level and include a new walkway on top of it, England said. There currently is no protection from the tide in most of that stretch, England said.

The new wall and rebuilding of the walkway is expected to cost \$10 million to \$25 million, according to a description of the project posted on a U.S. government website.

Building Dunes

Atlantic City Mayor Lorenzo Langford declined to discuss why the bulkhead wasn't built sooner. Instead, he described how a project similar to the one along the beach couldn't have been built along the inlet, which has little beach.

"There was nothing that you could have done," Langford said. "You can't go on the ocean, in the water, and build the dunes in the water. You find me \$400 million and I'll do that."

Officials said a bulkhead that includes steel, concrete and stone will be constructed.

"Having a seawall there versus having nothing certainly would have been more helpful," said Thomas Meehan, director of project implementation and management for the Atlantic City-based Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, a state-authorized economic development group.

Overlooking Needs

The delay on the seawall shows government officials overlooking the needs of the poor while giving priority to gambling resorts, Steele said.

"The neglect is coming back to bite us," Steele said. "The first people to feel the impact are the little guys at the bottom, because the fat cats can take their stock options and go to the next town."

The casinos didn't ask for the beach restoration project, said Tony Rodio, president of the Casino Association of New Jersey. The Atlantic City-based group advocates for casinos. He also said damage to homes near the inlet would have been more severe without the beach project.

Construction of a bulkhead will come too late for those who suffered in Sandy.

Houses, businesses, cars and furniture were destroyed after water overflowed from the inlet.

In the days after Sandy hit, those who live blocks from the inlet pulled wet mattresses and carpets out of their homes and apartments, and stacked broken lamps, sofas and dressers on the streets.

Dangling Fixtures

Along a strip of three-story red brick row houses, flood waters destroyed doors and damaged interiors. Electrical fixtures dangled from the ceiling.

More expensive housing also was damaged, including duplexes with vinyl siding, with first-floor garage doors that buckled from rushing water. The flooding smashed cars into each other.

Among the businesses damaged was All Star Liquors, next to the inlet. A foot of water and muck filled the store. Bottles crashed to the floor. The store suffered tens of thousands of dollars in losses, said Vishee Mandahar, 26, whose family owns the business.

He said the government didn't want to "waste their time" building protection for a low-income neighborhood.

"That's what it all comes down to," Mandahar said. "That's what the government does. I don't know what the right word would be. Shady?"

'So Scared'

Residents said they feared for their lives when water rushed through the neighborhood. Yolanda French was in her home with her two daughters, 21-year-old Porsha and 17-year-old Sydney.

"I've never in my life seen water like that," she said. "We were so scared. We thought we were going to drown."

The beach projects started in 2004 with 7.1 million cubic yards of sand poured in front of Atlantic City and neighboring Ventnor, according to Army Corps documents. Engineers returned this summer to plant dune and beach grasses and dump another 1.5 million cubic yards of sand, state documents show.

The Corps had recommended that the beach project extend into Margate and Longport, both south of Atlantic City. Those towns chose not to participate, Rochette said.

Damage was more severe to neighborhoods along the beaches in those areas, with siding ripped off houses and broken windows.

In Atlantic City last night, music played and slot machines whirred.

###

Port Authority: 2 more northern NJ ports shuttered by superstorm are due to reopen Monday
Associated Press

Two more northern New Jersey marine terminals shuttered by superstorm Sandy are reopening for business.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey says Global Terminal in Jersey City and the Port Newark Container Terminal will open Monday morning.

Both terminals will open their gates for truckers at 7 a.m. The first ship will arrive at the Global Terminal at 7 p.m., while Port Newark expects vessel traffic to resume Monday night.

The reopenings come one day after operations restarted at the Port Elizabeth Terminal. Four cargo vessels were expected at the Maher Terminal there on Sunday, while one cargo vessel was expected at the APM Terminal.

The Port of New York and New Jersey is the largest on the East Coast, and the third largest in the nation.

###

Port resumes operations in Sandy's wake

Steve Strunsky
Star-Ledger

The East Coast's busiest port got back to business today after being swamped Hurricane Sandy's surge.

Longshoremen began unloading a variety of cargo this morning at the Maher and APM container terminals along Newark Bay in Elizabeth, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said. Several ships were expected at the two terminals today, said the Port Authority.

The Port Newark terminal in Newark and the Global terminal in Jersey City are scheduled to open its gates on Monday morning, followed by the first vessel's arrival at Global at 7 p.m., the Port Authority said.

Joe Curto, president of the New York Shipping Association, which represents stevedores and other companies that do business at the port, said the companies and their union workers from the International Longshoremen's Association were eager to be back on the job.

"Of course, the longshoremen were most anxious to return to work — those that could — because if they don't work they don't 'get paid,'" said Curto, adding that there was a full turn out today at Maher and APM. "Naturally, we're in a 24-7, 365-day industry, and to be shut down for three or four days like this, it hurts."

Jim McNamara, a spokesman for the ILA, said it wasn't just wages at stake.

"The members were anxious to get back to work not only for their own employment, but to get things back to normal," McNamara said. "Commerce is moving again, and that's very important for everybody, and we're anxious to be part of that."

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection service said it was working closely with the Coast Guard and the Port Authority to speed overseas vessels into local terminals, which included conducting immigration checks on tanker crews to facilitate the flow of gasoline into the region.

Officials did not have estimates for how much the storm had cost the port in terms of damage, lost wages and earnings or other expenses. But an analysis done by the Port Authority in advance of potential strike this fall put the cost to the region at \$136 million a week in personal income and another \$110 million in economic output. The strike was averted when federal labor mediators intervened.

Sandy, on the other hand, struck hard last Monday, inundating terminals and forcing ships tied up dockside or moored close to shore to flee to open water to avoid damage by waves or a storm surge well above the normal high tide.

Floodwaters have receded, and port roads have been cleared for tractor trailers that haul 40-foot shipping containers. However, power was still out in some areas and would have to be restored for the port to resume full operations, the Port Authority said. The agency said crews have worked around the clock to clear hundreds of containers floated by floodwaters, and to repair roadways, rail lines, electrical systems and other port facilities damaged by the storm.

"Reopening of the port is critical to the region's economic recovery from the devastating effects of Hurricane Sandy," the Port Authority said in a statement. "The port contributes billions to the region's economic activity and accounts for more than 269,000 jobs. We continue to work around the clock with all of our port partners to get all of our maritime facilities open quickly to ensure that our port — which enables the flow of goods to approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population in fewer than eight hours — is back in business and fully operational."

###

N.J. unveils emergency bus plan for Monday commute

Hannan Adely

The Record

New Jersey officials rolled out a massive emergency bus plan to help residents get back to their jobs Monday after Hurricane Sandy crippled public transportation.

The emergency plan, announced Sunday, includes fleets of buses that will leave from local lots to ferry and rail lines with connections to New York City, and in some cases will deliver passengers straight to lower Manhattan. The buses will help ease the congestion after the storm, which crippled rail lines and closed the Holland Tunnel to all but bus traffic.

"Our rail infrastructure is still heavily damaged and our rail capacity into New York Penn Station can only transport a fraction of our weekday customers," said NJ Transit Executive Director James Weinstein. "These are extraordinary times, the busing plan announced today will help bring our customers back to work — and just a little bit closer to resuming their everyday lives."

The commuters can ride the buses to ferries, light rail and to their jobs in Hoboken, Weehawken, Jersey City and Manhattan. The temporary service is expected to provide about 50 percent of NJ Transit's normal rail rush hour service, officials said. There are also four designated stops in lower Manhattan.

The plan includes bus service to and from the Willowbrook Mall in Wayne, the Route 17 Park and Ride in Ramsey, and MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford.

The buses will operate weekdays from 6 to 10 a.m., and from 4 to 8 p.m., until further notice. In addition, free ferry service will be available from Liberty State Park Marina in Jersey City to Battery Park.

The bus service is direly needed because of emergency conditions that still exist throughout the rail system. NJ Transit normally operates 63 trains into New York Penn Station during the morning peak, but will only be

operating 13 tomorrow because of hurricane damage and power outages.

It will be weeks before rail service is fully restored, officials said.

For more information on the bus plan, visit njtransit.com. Automated service information is also available by calling (973) 275-5555.

###

Cleanup, gas rationing continue in NJ after storm

Ben Nuckols

Associated Press

New Jersey residents found ways Sunday to adjust to gas rationing in effect from the superstorm, by ignoring the state's longstanding law against pumping your own gas, handing off gas cans on the way to the Giants game or just driving far from home to avoid the rules. And along the shore, people in one town traded kayaks for rain boots as floodwaters finally receded and they returned to their homes to assess damage.

About 1 million homes and businesses across New Jersey remained without electricity Sunday, and many of those customers may not have service restored until Wednesday. The storm has been blamed for 23 deaths in the state and more than 100 overall.

Gov. Chris Christie said Sunday that all 21 New Jersey counties will now be included in the major disaster area declaration, so all residents will now be able to seek assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Administration. And despite the despair the storm had brought the state, he has seen people working together to provide for others everywhere he has traveled in New Jersey since the storm hit.

"This is a symbol of New Jersey coming together during a really difficult time," Christie said. "A week ago today, we were preparing for the storm to come tomorrow, and now, we're returning to a new normal."

Along the Jersey Shore, cleanup work continued.

The waters ebbed overnight in the shore town of Belmar and left behind slippery, pungent mud. Many residents were only able to begin pumping out their basements Sunday, six days after the storm overwhelmed the town with a surge that they likened to a tsunami.

A snapping turtle was sitting on the muddy lawn of Chris and Nancy Lukas as they began the grim process of cataloging their ruined belongings. Their home overlooks Silver Lake, where crews have been pumping water from the storm surge back into the ocean.

"We kayaked here yesterday," Nancy Lukas said. "You can't do anything, so you feel useless." Unlike many Belmar residents, the Lukases heeded an evacuation order ahead of the storm.

"I'm so glad I didn't see that wall of water," Nancy Lukas said. "How do you erase that from your memory? This is bad enough - the aftermath."

The newly passable roads helped bring hundreds to the Church of Saint Rose, where Bishop David O'Connell of the Diocese of Trenton celebrated Mass. Parishioners wore parkas, scarves and waterproof boots as they packed the pews and stood in the aisles of the chilly church. Firefighters, police officers sat in the front rows and drew sustained applause.

Crews have been pumping water out of the church's basement for the past four days. Flooding also ruined classroom space and the cafeteria at the parish high school.

O'Connell said at Mass that the community would persevere.

"There's more good, and there's more joy, and there's more happiness in life than there is the opposite. And it will be back," O'Connell said. "And we will be back."

He quoted from the Bible, a letter from Paul: "'We are afflicted in every way possible,' St. Paul writes, 'but we are never crushed.'"

Sunday was also the first full day of gas rationing in the state, which Christie ordered for 12 counties, saying it would help ease fuel shortages and the long lines at gas stations. It was to remain in place as long as Christie deemed a need for it, which he said he hoped would be no more than a few days.

During his news conference Sunday, Christie emphasized that New Jersey is not suffering from a fuel shortage.

"What happened was when power went out to refineries, and power went out to pipelines, they couldn't move the gas," Christie said. "The gas is there."

Power has since been restored to all refineries and pipelines, he said.

Meanwhile, long lines again appeared Sunday at gas stations in northern and central New Jersey, drivers seemed to be coping with the rationing.

Drivers with license plates where the last number is an even number can buy gas on even-numbered days, and those with plates where the last number is an odd number on odd-numbered days. Drivers with vanity plates that have no numbers can buy gas on odd-numbered days.

The further south motorists were able to drive, the easier it was to get gas. At a Lukoil station in Lakewood, there were no lines early Sunday afternoon, although station manager Syed Uddin said customers were waiting 30-40 minutes in the morning.

The station was closed Saturday because it ran out of gas Friday. The station sold 15,000 gallons that day, five times what it sells on a typical day, Uddin said.

Some customers were even defying New Jersey's law against pumping your own gas, although Uddin said he was not granting permission to do so. "People, they don't listen," he said.

Lew Thompson of Toms River was pumping his own gas into two plastic canisters so he could power his generator.

"Makes it a little quicker," Thompson said of self-service. "Like the governor said, sometimes you've got to cut through the bureaucracy and get it done."

Lakewood is at the northern end of Ocean County, which meant gas rationing was not in effect as it was in Monmouth County, just a few miles away. Many drivers were heading south to avoid the restrictions.

"The hysteria up there is not worth it," said Bob Rooney of Red Bank.

Tony Jones of Spring Lake, where no stations are open, brought two vehicles to Lakewood to fill up Sunday. He said many people were confused by the rationing, which he thinks has been ineffectual.

"A lot of people don't even understand what odd-even is on their plates," Jones said.

But even in Lakewood, gas lines have been common.

"I sat on line an hour and a half here at this station like four days ago," said Donald Giberson, who lives nearby.

Damage and power outages from the storm have made fuel delivery difficult and rendered many gas pumps inoperable. Three fuel depots have been set up in the state to provide up to 15 gallons of gas to doctors and nurses so they can get to work.

Fans whose homes had storm damage or no power found ways to get to the Giants-Steelers game Sunday at the Meadowlands in East Rutherford.

Roger Daly of Norwood, who has had season tickets since the Giants played in Yankee Stadium, eventually drove 60 miles each way to find gas. He was glad to be at the stadium, believing it delivers some sort of a message.

"I feel bad for everyone who got wiped out, but we have to live our lives like we always did," he said. "I still don't have telephone, Internet, but I'm here and this is a good release."

Nearby was Ryan Plaza of Sugarloaf, Pa., who was not affected by the storm, but he brought 15 gallons of gas to his cousin in New Jersey, then headed to the stadium.

Monday promised to begin the restoration of some everyday activities in the state. About half of the state's school districts reported they will reopen, New Jersey Transit said it would have more train and bus service restored in time for the workweek to start, and Philadelphia's transit authority loaned 31 buses that New Jersey Transit planned to use to support shuttle service for commuters traveling to New York City.

Christie also said he's hopeful that the PATH service will reopen by the end of the week.

NY Waterway planned to operate normal ferry and bus service, including service from the Hoboken Rail/Ferry Terminal, starting at 6 a.m. Monday. There was to be no service from Jersey City's Port Liberte terminal, which was damaged severely.

Christie also said Election Day will go on as planned Tuesday.

"We will have a full, fair and transparent open voting process," he said.

###

A Q&A on ... disaster insurance

Star-Ledger

Hurricane Sandy has shattered — and shredded — businesses throughout New Jersey. It's the type of storm that climate change experts have predicted: Bigger. Nastier. Worsened by higher water temperatures and heavier moisture in the air.

As severe weather wreaks more havoc, business leaders, be they conservative or liberal, are seeing the impact on their bottom line. When Hurricane Katrina devoured the Gulf Coast in 2005, sweeping away roads, power lines and entire buildings, hundreds of thousands of people were left jobless. It led to a severe cutback in consumer spending and tax revenues.

Andrew Logan, director of the insurance program for Ceres, a nonprofit coalition of investors and environmentalists, spoke to Star-Ledger editorial writer Julie O'Connor last week about the scary economics of our wilder weather.

Q. You say we shouldn't write Hurricane Sandy off as a freak storm, or anomaly. Why?

A. We've seen unusually severe weather over the last several years, everything from droughts to wildfires. That's characteristic of climate change. We know that it puts more energy into storms, more rainfall. And we know it's raising the level of the ocean and making storm surges worse.

What we're seeing with events like Hurricane Sandy is a triple-whammy of warmer oceans, more rain and higher sea levels. It's what the future might look like if we don't get climate change under control.

Q. Why should the insurance industry be worried?

A. Insurance makes the world go round. You can't buy a house or run a business without insurance. Our concern is that climate change threatens the availability and affordability of insurance, which has real negative implications for the broader economy. The insurance sector is potentially on the hook for the physical costs of more extreme weather. If insurers don't plan for those increased impacts, the worry is that insurance won't be there in the future when we need it, or affordable to consumers.

Q. What does this unpredictability mean for future coverage?

A. It's a major risk. The industry is built on the expectation that even extreme weather is, in some measure, predictable over time — that the past could guide the future. Insurers take historic trends around weather and project those forward. That's worked well for a century or more, but is turning out not to work in a world where climate change is running rampant.

The first principal of insurance is to understand the nature of the risk. That's why climate change really threatens to undercut the industry's entire business model. If the industry doesn't feel like it understands the risk, then it

really is impossible to provide coverage.

Q. What catastrophes have caused the biggest economic losses?

A. The biggest single event losses tend to be hurricanes. Katrina was the largest. But increasingly, there's nowhere to hide from disaster in the U.S.

In the past, our concern focused mostly on hurricanes in the South. But now, we're seeing expensive disasters in the Midwest and the West: droughts, wildfires and flooding. We're seeing hurricanes in places like the Northeast, where we rarely saw them previously. The whole country seems to be becoming more vulnerable to extreme weather.

Last year was a record year — we had 12 events that each cost over a billion dollars in damage. Almost all of them were not hurricanes; they were tornadoes, they were wildfires, they were floods. And they happened in places like the Midwest, away from the coast, which you think of as being not as vulnerable to climate change. Which indicates just how much extreme weather is changing.

Q. Are taxpayers assuming more of these losses?

A. The trend of the last decade, of risks being shifted from the insurance industry to taxpayers, is a huge concern. As insurers have become less willing to cover high-risk areas, the government has had to step in and create its own insurance pools. This is the case in many states on the coast. Often, they're set up in a way that even taxpayers who are not from the coast will end up having to pay. If there's a high loss, there's essentially a surcharge on all policyholders in the state, or it channels through the state budget.

The fact that the largest insurer in the state of Florida is the state of Florida ought to raise concern for anyone who worries about the fiscal health of the U.S. The government has taken on the highest risk in places like the coast, and also owns most of the risk related to the flooding through the national flood insurance program, which is already something like \$20 billion in debt. In a storm like Sandy, where so much of the damage is water-related, it will be taxpayers picking up most of the damage. Where it's more wind-related, that would fall mostly to the private market.

There's a lot of momentum to reform the national flood insurance program. It's set up in a way that doesn't provide enough incentive for people to not live in harm's way. The liability for taxpayers is increasingly becoming untenable.

Q. As wild-card disasters occur more often, what kinds of things will insurers no longer cover?

A. That's the great unknown. What will the reaction of insurers be?

Our hope is that rather than being reactive to storms like Sandy and pulling out of those areas, that insurers will be proactive and work with policyholders to make them resilient to the next storm that comes.

The insurance industry has a history, stretching back 100 years, of helping society adapt to risk. There's a strong role for them to play here, as well. Insurers could provide financial incentives for greater resilience by giving discounts for things that make homes less risky.

Q. Could insurers more effectively motivate society to reduce risks than government?

A. That's our belief. We think insurers have strong financial reasons to want society to be much more aggressive in preparing for, and preventing, climate change. The buck really does stop with them. We are seeing some insurers take strong stands and push for greater action, both to adapt to climate change and to prevent its worst impact. Like the German insurance company Munich Re, which has its North American headquarters in Princeton.

Q. The business community complains loudly about taxes and regulations. What about the financial losses from climate change?

A. We are seeing an increasing movement by business leaders and investors to advocate for more aggressive measures on climate change, because it really impacts their bottom line. But I'm surprised it's not louder than it is. The number of businesses that will be negatively impacted by climate change far outweigh those that might see risk from regulation.

We are moving toward a tipping point where the financial case for action on global warming is overwhelming.

Q. But when will that happen? And will it be too late?

A. I think we're closer than many think. I've seen a real sea change over the last year or two in the degree of concern among insurers. We're not that far from hitting a critical mass. You think of the insurance industry as being quite conservative and Republican, but this is really about the bottom line, not just about the environment. It's an issue that ought to unite both left and right.

###

Unfinished 9/11 Museum Is Flooded

David W. Dunlap

New York Times – City Room

The main floor of the National September 11 Memorial Museum at the World Trade Center is flooded with at least five feet of water.

The extent of the damage is not clear. The most important and vulnerable of the artifacts on the floor is the last column left standing from the twin towers, which is covered with graffiti spray-painted by first responders, rescuers and recovery workers.

A spokeswoman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which controls the trade center site, said Thursday that it was too early to tell how much of the last column was under water. The spokeswoman, Lisa MacSpadden, said officials "will have to assess once the pumping is complete."

Focused on the recovery efforts after Hurricane Sandy, officials from the Port Authority and the museum's foundation would discuss the extent of flooding and possible damage.

But because construction has been delayed by a protracted financing dispute between the Port Authority and the memorial foundation that was not resolved until Sept. 10, the museum is nowhere near completion.

That means there may be a chance to build in measures to safeguard the collection and perhaps to rethink how many artifacts ought to be placed on the main floor, which is 68 feet below the memorial plaza.

It could, in fact, become a laboratory for design in the face of extreme weather.

"Our climate is changing," Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said when he endorsed President Obama's re-election last week. As chairman of the memorial foundation, and by extension the most senior executive of the museum, Mr. Bloomberg will have a chance to acknowledge that change on a tangible level.

It was understood that a portion of the memorial was to be constructed in a 100-year flood plain — that is, an area of dry land with a 1 percent chance of flooding each year due to storms (and, therefore, a 100 percent chance of being flooded once a century).

In the environmental impact statement of 2004, which acknowledged the flood risk, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation stated that "because the locational aspect of the event is paramount to the memorial itself, relocating the W.T.C. memorial is not practicable."

It did not seem conceivable then that a 100-year flood would occur during Hurricane Irene last year — before the museum's opening day — and that a second disruptive storm would pass through 14 months later.

"They call it the hundred-year flood because it's only supposed to happen every hundred years," Governor Cuomo said Tuesday after touring the flooded trade center. "I told President Obama, we have a hundred-year flood every two years."

Because of the way the museum space is threaded through the foundations of the World Trade Center, its main floor is actually the lowest. There, in what is called the West Chamber, stands an exposed section of the slurry wall that helped protect the trade center's foundations from the naturally high water table around it.

Besides the last column, several other significant artifacts are in place. They include the so-called survivors' stairway that was a path to safety on Sept. 11, 2001; a cross-shaped steel beam, found in the ruins, at which

rescue and recovery workers celebrated Mass; fire trucks used by Ladder Company 3 and Engine Company 21; and a damaged taxi cab.

All but the very largest objects, like the stairway, have been under wraps and may have been spared any damage. But five feet of water would almost surely have touched, if not flooded, vitrines and display cases filled with the intimate and irreplaceable artifacts that have been donated, both spontaneously and in response to an acquisition campaign seeking photographs, videotapes, recovered property, clothing and other personal effects, workplace memorabilia, documents, letters, printed copies of e-mails, and diaries. The museum's collection includes the radio used on the morning of 9/11 by Chief Peter J. Ganci, the highest-ranking Fire Department officer in uniform to die that day.

Politics and nature have conspired to give museum officials a chance to think about how they will decide what they will display on the main floor and how they will safeguard those objects in any flood.

###

With nor'easter approaching, N.J. more vulnerable to storms thanks to Sandy's destruction

Stephen Stirling and Dan Goldberg

Star-Ledger

In any given winter, New Jersey shrugs off nor'easters and other storm systems by the dozen. Life goes on. The state keeps moving.

But the new reality after Superstorm Sandy flattened the coastline is far different. With many of the state's protective dunes destroyed or seriously eroded, a storm that last year would barely be noticed can now become a serious problem, causing major coastal flooding and further endangering homes and businesses along the staggering shoreline.

"We don't have any coastal defense, and we have an entire winter storm season coming," said David Robinson, the state climatologist at Rutgers University. "That could be a serious problem."

The state's dunes, berms and other elevated coastal topography are New Jersey's chief protection along the Atlantic Coast and Raritan and Delaware bays against coastal flooding. Without them, the coast is exposed, leaving shoreline communities extremely vulnerable to high tides during storms, according to Gary Szatkowski, meteorologist in charge at the National Weather Service's Mount Holly office.

"This is a terrible way to start the cold season," Szatkowski said. "We're more vulnerable than we have been in decades."

NOR'EASTER ON THE WAY

With the state on the ropes, Mother Nature is about to throw another punch.

The storm is expected to arrive late Wednesday and promises punishing winds through Thursday.

That means more downed trees, more flooding and more misery.

"That would obviously be a huge pain," Gov. Chris Christie said during an afternoon news conference in Hoboken. "We're hoping it goes someplace else, but if it comes, it comes. I deal with it one day at a time."

Gusts are expected to reach 50 mph in parts of the state, which could hamper utility crew desperately trying to restore power, according to meteorologists.

There could also be moderate coastal flooding, a cruel aftershock to homeowners along the shore still coming to grips with Sandy's destruction.

"The area that will be most affected, unfortunately is the area hit hardest by the previous storm," said National Weather Service meteorologist Patrick O'Hara.

Buildings compromised by Sandy could be further damaged or destroyed by additional coastal flooding, since many protective dunes have been washed away or significantly eroded.

And it will be cold. The rest of the week will look a lot like yesterday: highs in the 50s and lows dropping into the 30s. A freeze warning was in effect for Burlington, Ocean, Cumberland, Atlantic and Cape May counties from 3 a.m. to 8 a.m., according to the National Weather Service.

There is some good news: It appears there is little chance for snow. New Jersey can still expect 1 to 2 inches of rain, O'Hara said.

And while snow is unlikely, lows in the mid-30s is cold comfort to the thousands of homes who remain without heat.

###

Signs of progress tempered by continuing frustrations

Hannan Adely and John C. Ensslin

The Record

As North Jersey enters its second week of post-Sandy chaos, residents can expect more mass-transit choices and shorter gas lines. But they will still be coping with a crowded commute, lingering power outages and still more school closings.

If that isn't enough to deal with, weather forecasters are still tracking a possible nor'easter that could sweep through the area by midweek — earlier than originally predicted — possibly bringing a mix of snow and rain that could further stress the area's battered power lines and trees.

And then, how's this for an extra complication? Some voters on Tuesday will need to find their way to polling places — dozens of which have been moved because they still lack power.

On Sunday, nearly a million state residents remained in the dark.

The upheaval is all part of the destruction wrought by Sandy, which felled trees and power lines, crippled public infrastructure and made the commute extremely difficult.

Still, there are signs of progress. While many schools remain closed today, some will open — and others are holding off until Wednesday. More rail lines have resumed service and an emergency bus service is being launched with dozens of buses moving commuters to rail and ferry connections.

Governor Christie said he hopes to ensure that every child is back in school and every household has electricity by the end of the week.

"I hope by the end of [this] week we could have all those major things done," he said. "... If we can come out a week and a half after the biggest storm New Jersey has ever had, and have life be close to normal, that's a good 10 days' worth of work. So I'm hopeful."

Some residents took the lines and outages in stride.

Ed Marta of Wayne was in good spirits on Sunday — an even-numbered day — as he filled several gas cans to replenish his car, which has odd-numbered license plates. He has no power, no heat and no hot water, but that hasn't gotten him down.

"Life is too good," he said. "There's nothing you can do with the weather. Last year we had the water, and now we have no electric."

The morning commute should see some progress.

Four train lines resumed service Sunday, and 90 percent of NJ Transit buses are back on schedule. An emergency bus plan starting today will add dozens of buses with stops at Willowbrook Mall in Wayne, MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford and a Ramsey park-and-ride.

The schedule restores about half of NJ Transit's normal rail rush hour service, officials said.

Many train routes remain suspended and that will make for a messy commute today and for the rest of the week.

"We expect large crowds tomorrow," NJ Transit spokesman John Durso Jr. said Sunday "But [passengers] should clearly understand there will be delays, there will be crowded trains and buses, and they should plan their travels accordingly."

Durso said only a fraction of normal bus and train service into New York City is operational. Normally, there are 63 trains into the city during morning peak hour; today there will be only 13.

Commuters, he said, should travel during off-peak periods, if possible. They can expect continued delays and detours in the weeks ahead.

The lines that reopened Sunday include the North Jersey Coast Line and the Main/Port Jervis Line, both with service to New York. The Raritan Valley and Atlantic City lines also resumed service.

It may take weeks for complete service to return, Durso said. NJ Transit is dealing with hundreds of trees that have fallen across the rails, in some cases damaging overhead and signal wires. Several rail stations had flood damage, and in some places power outages left rail operators unable to test crossing gates and operating signals.

For those driving to work, Christie said National Guard tankers have begun delivering fuel to gas stations in a number of counties, including Bergen and Passaic. He didn't give an estimate Sunday on when the state's gas rationing program will end.

"I think this is going to be relatively short," he said at a Hoboken press conference. But the rationing that began Saturday may need to continue if a nor'easter hits in the middle of the week, he said.

There were signs that the rationing was cutting down on the long lines of vehicles outside area gas stations. On Route 23 south in Pequannock, a line that had grown to 70 vehicles on Wednesday was down to around 36 at 3 p.m. Sunday.

Meanwhile, Bergen County government offices in Hackensack will reopen today for the first time in a week. One Bergen County Plaza, which had been running on limited generator power, will provide a warming center and a charging area for residents still without power, said County Administrator Ed Trawinski.

Elsewhere in New Jersey, the crisis continues, with some residents unable to return home either because of dangerous conditions or because they simply no longer have a home.

State police will be reinforced with 280 troopers from eight other states who will help with security and recovery operations. Their assignments will include security at checkpoints and patrols in hard-hit Monmouth County.

###

Frustration high across North Jersey as utilities fall short on power goals

Mary Jo Layton
The Record

Nearly 1 million New Jersey residents remained without power Sunday as temperatures dipped, patience waned and some North Jersey mayors criticized utilities for failing to restore service.

The frustration was particularly high in still-dark towns where PSE&G had indicated power would likely be restored by Saturday, including Fort Lee, Ridgewood and Teaneck.

"I'm scared to go into the buildings in my own town," said Fort Lee Mayor Mark Sokolich. "These people are freaking. It's now five or six days without power. They expect it to be on. They were told they would have power and it's not on."

The growing anger comes at a time when there's been steady but slow progress in other areas: Mass transit has begun operating throughout most of the state, panic at the gas lines seems to be easing and some schools are reopening Monday.

Governor Christie continued to pressure utility companies, insisting on daily updates and town-by-town plans on when power will resume while encouraging weary residents to hang in there: 11,000 workers were on the ground, three times the normal workforce, to restore normalcy after Hurricane Sandy devastated the state a week ago.

"I know that when I tell you we're under a million people out of power [down] from 2.7 million, that does not mean a damn thing to you unless your power's on," the governor said at a press briefing in Hoboken. "I get it. We will not stop working until every last resident has their power on."

With shorter days, colder nights and the threat of another storm looming midweek, Sandy fatigue has taken hold: the four-hour stints at Dunkin' Donuts no longer work; the Scrabble by candlelight is so last week; and the forced encampments with the relatives is becoming challenging even with a glass of wine served with the take-out du jour.

There was progress in Englewood on Sunday. "PSE&G got the job done," Englewood Mayor Frank Huttle said late Sunday night. "The city is lighting up as promised."

But other towns remained dark, triggering concerns that the prolonged outages and cold had become dangerous for residents, particularly the elderly.

"I have people 85 and 90 years old who are on the 15th floor of buildings and they don't have power," Sokolich said.

"Every time we see a PSE&G truck in town I am pulling him over and begging the guy to stay," he said. "These people think I'm nuts, like 'here comes the mayor again.'"

It didn't help that PSE&G put out a report on Saturday that listed a timetable for when many towns could expect power to be restored. The utility called it a "workforce schedule" and not a guarantee, but the public took it as a promise. In many, if not most cases, those timetables were not met.

"False promises don't help anybody," said Ridgewood Mayor Paul Aronsohn. "It hurts the situation."

Aronsohn said the village was anticipating complete return to power Saturday based on reports by PSE&G. Not only did that not happen, but as of Sunday, the power company said even more residents than they had thought – two-thirds of the village – was now without power.

A spokeswoman for the utility said that local officials may have misinterpreted its timetable. "The problem is these reports are being put together as quickly as humanly possible," said a PSE&G spokeswoman, Bonnie Sheppard. "The other thing's that's confusing is it's a snapshot of time. It does not represent everything that will happen in the town over the next three days."

In addition to Ridgewood and Fort Lee, the company had expected to restore power by the weekend to several other towns including: Hackensack, Teaneck, Cliffside Park, Edgewater, Elmwood Park, Fair Lawn, Garfield, Little Ferry, Palisades Park, Paramus and River Edge in Bergen County by Sunday. Additionally, Clifton, Passaic Paterson, Wayne and Little Falls in Passaic County were expected to have power throughout the municipalities.

All were still wanting Sunday evening.

PSE&G reported 439,000 customers statewide without power Sunday afternoon, including 109,500 in Bergen County, 70,600 in Hudson County and 41,200 in Passaic County. Statewide 78 percent of those who had lost power because of Sandy had been restored.

The company also reported that five substations remain without power, all in Hudson County. All should be back online by today, officials said.

"Restoring the substations is a critical step in allowing the company to power the distribution systems that bring electricity to customer's homes.

Seventy-five percent of JCP&L customers have had their power restored, Christie said.

Christie chided executives at Orange & Rockland Utilities, noting of the rate of customers with power — "61 percent is not acceptable at this time."

The utility reported 95,000 customers still without power including nearly 25,000 in Bergen County and almost 9,000 in Passaic County. Town tallies are as follows: Mahwah 3,760; Montvale 1,080; Oakland 2,060; Ramsey 3,653; Upper Saddle River, 1,244; Wyckoff 1,975; and in Passaic County: Hewitt, 2,594; Ringwood 2,255 and in West Milford 4,056, according to spokesman Mike Donovan.

"It's a total mess out there," said Donovan said. "We've dug in. We expect the vast majority will have power this week."

Orange & Rockland has 3,500 workers on the case, including 1,500 from out of state, Donovan said, adding that 75 trucks were airlifted and 200 workers were flown in from southern California by Air Force transport. Fifty members of the National Guard are providing security for downed wires.

Count Cynthia Rice among the unimpressed. The Franklin Lakes resident, one of 15,011 in town without power, has called Orange & Rockland's response to the hurricane "abysmal."

The utility reported several head-spinning startup dates in an 18-hour period, she said, each raising their hopes, only to have them vanquished with more cold and darkness. Her coping strategy? Rice and her husband joined a gym for a week so the couple could shower.

"It's like we're Bedouins," she said. "Our offices are closed, the house is cold so we stay out as much as possible. Now we're starting to worry about the pipes freezing."

In Ho-Ho-Kus, residents are also still hoping for power someday.

"It's so cold in my house that we can see our breath," Mary Connelly said. "It's not safe for my family to stay here anymore. We don't know when we will have power. Nobody's seen a PSE&G truck in days. The worst part is you can't risk going to a hotel because you can't waste all that gas going back and forth."

While there was progress in Wayne, Dave Kuhnlein is still waiting. He's been going to a Blimpie sub shop to get warm and do some office work for about four hours a day since the power went out. Throughout the week, he and his family coped by piling on clothing and covers.

"It wasn't as bad when we were sleeping. This weekend chill [made it worse]," he said, noting the 53-degree temperature indoors.

On Saturday, he and other employees at Dunkin Brands got a welcome gift from their boss, Nigel Travis. The chief executive officer of the company gave them generators to take home. The temperature quickly rose to 67 in Kuhnlein's home in just 2½ hours.

###

Website launched to accept donations for Christie's Sandy relief fund

Ben Horowitz

Star-Ledger

A website has been launched for the newly established Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund, Gov. Chris Christie and First Lady Mary Pat Christie announced today.

Following Saturday's establishment of the fund, New Jerseyans may visit www.SandyNJReliefFund.org to make donations online.

The fund will provide a "critical mechanism" to collect donations and assistance and help families affected by the destruction of the storm and will continue well beyond "the initial stages" of recovery, according to spokesmen for Christie.

"As recovery efforts continue, we know that even greater needs will become apparent for our families who have been impacted so deeply and extensively by this disaster, Christie said in a statement. "This fund – and now this website – will give fellow New Jerseyans and those around the country an avenue to contribute to our efforts and to assist our neighbors and communities throughout the recovery period."

Said Mary Pat Christie, who serves as chairwoman of the fund: "Hurricane Sandy has brought unthinkable devastation to parts of our Garden State, destroying homes, businesses and some of New Jersey's most identifiable icons. In the aftermath, we must support and help our friends, neighbors and so many others impacted by the storm."

Donations for the fund may also be mailed to Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund, P.O. Box 95, Mendham, NJ 07945-0095. Information about the fund may be obtained via e-mail at info@sandynjrelieffund.org.

###

Crews from around the region coming to help with Sandy aftermath

Inquirer

It's not just famous musicians who are helping victims of Hurricane Sandy. Lots of help from crews in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and around the United States are providing equipment and manpower.

Camden County sent trucks and a crew to Longport to help with moving sand and other cleanup. The county sent two mobile radio repeaters - equipment that allows first responders to access a state Office of Emergency Management channel - to Monmouth County.

Monmouth's eight police departments and other emergency personnel have been operating without full communications capabilities since the storm.

"All counties are dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy together," said Camden Freeholder Ian Leonard.

Sunday morning, a caravan of seven to 10 vehicles packed with supplies was to leave the Southeastern Pennsylvania Red Cross headquarters, bound for New York City.

Also on Sunday, a convoy of 30 SEPTA buses is set to leave Conshohocken at 10 a.m., headed for New Brunswick, N.J. There, Suburban Transit drivers will take over, shuttling passengers into New York City.

The reduction in SEPTA's fleet is not expected to affect passengers here, officials said in a news release.

###

Coast Guard crew finds several navigation hazards during first post-storm patrol of Sandy Hook

Associated Press

A Coast Guard crew has uncovered several potential navigation hazards during the agency's first patrol of Sandy Hook waterways since Superstorm Sandy hit the region a week ago.

The small-boat crew off the Coast Guard Cutter Ridley, which is homeported in Montauk, N.Y., conducted its mission Saturday.

While performing the law enforcement patrol, crew members observed various hazards in the Sandy Hook Bay and inlet, including a sunken vessel, floating debris and displaced aids to navigation buoys. Coast Guard officials urged boaters to be aware of these and other potential hazards while traveling in Sandy Hook's waterways.

The Ridley is one of many Coast Guard cutters that were deployed to the New York and New Jersey waters to assist in harbor assessments, recovery efforts and law enforcement.

###

North Jerseyans, groups mobilize to help Sandy's victims

Rebecca Baker

The Record

From state-run efforts to help thousands left without heat or without homes to neighborhood events that will help a few families in need, there seems to be no shortage of ways to donate time, money and supplies to those hardest hit by the storm.

And those who have organized Sandy fundraisers say they have been besieged by generosity.

"I'm completely overwhelmed by what people are willing to bring and donate," said Seth Ruderman, a Wayne resident who collected enough goods and money within 48 hours to fill five rental trucks with supplies for victims in New York City, where he grew up. "I still have donations coming in."

By Sunday, countless organizations had mobilized to respond to public interest in donating to storm victims.

The American Red Cross' northern New Jersey headquarters was bustling in Fairfield, where about two dozen people were being trained as volunteers. Diane Concannon, the spokeswoman for the Red Cross in New Jersey, said hundreds of volunteers have stepped forward.

While volunteers and cash donations are welcome, Concannon said, in-kind donations such as clothing, blankets and food are discouraged. People wanting to donate those items should turn to their local food pantries or community groups.

At the Meadowlands, food was collected at MetLife Stadium before and during the New York Giants game. In Ridgefield Park, residents dropped off clothes and food at the junior-senior high school, which will continue to accept donations for victims in the village and in Little Ferry Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Statewide, Governor Christie's administration launched a website Sunday for people to donate to the Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund which is also collecting checks at PO Box 95, Mendham N.J. 07945-0095.

"The images and stories of the damage are heartbreaking," said First Lady Mary Pat Christie, the fund's chairwoman. "In the aftermath, we must support and help our friends, neighbors and so many others impacted by the storm."

The Community Food Bank of New Jersey, which says it's distributing more than 100,000 pounds of food to Hurricane Sandy victims daily, has asked for canned tuna, soup, fruit and vegetables; meals in a can; peanut butter, shelf-stable milk, cereal, baby food in non-glass jars and diapers, as well as cash donations on its website.

Bergen County, meanwhile, has set up drop-off sites for food, clothing and supplies at Community Transportation in Lodi and at the Midland Park Senior Center in Midland Park that are open until 6 p.m. daily.

In Wayne, the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, known as VOAD, has been accepting food donations from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at its headquarters at 189 Berdan Ave. VOAD also has been looking for volunteers to work the shelters, particularly overnight. Those seeking to work at the shelter can call 973-694-6466 or go directly to the shelter at Captain Kilroy Park, 1 Concord Place in Wayne, but park on Kiwanis Drive and walk across the footbridge.

Also in Wayne, two women who planned to run in the New York Marathon — scheduled for Sunday but canceled on Friday — organized a 26-mile run to help Wayne Police Officer Bob Franco, who was hurt when a tree crashed into his police car while he was inside it.

Danielle Hasenbein, who with fellow runner Hara O'Dowd created the fundraiser, said the event attracted about 50 runners who raised more than \$3,000 for the officer's family.

"It's incredible what you can do in 24 hours," she said.

The Police Benevolent Association is still collecting donations for the officer's family, which can be made through the Wayne PBA, in care of The Franco family, PO Box 3597, Wayne, N.J. 07470.

Ruderman was also going to run the New York City Marathon, but bowed out and refocused his efforts on running supplies to the five boroughs. He collected 15,000 bottles of donated water and non-perishable food, and what items weren't donated he purchased with the \$6,000 people gave in online donations.

He sent two trucks to Sea Gate, Brooklyn and one each to distribution centers or charities in Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. The Bronx Food Kitchen will receive the \$1,400 left over from the cash donations.

Ruderman now wants to help his new hometown. Any food dropped off at his home at 20 Robin Hood Way will be given to the Wayne Food Pantry, which he said running low on supplies.

But he doesn't think they'll run low for long.

"I still have donations coming in," he said.

###

As Gov. Christie reassures N.J., residents rocked by Sandy reach out to help others

Mike Frassinelli and Ted Sherman
Star-Ledger

After one of the worst weeks in state history, with miles of coast levelled, thousands of homes shredded and millions left in the cold and dark, Gov. Christie tried to rally New Jerseyans at a press conference Sunday.

"We're returning now to a new normal," he said from Hoboken, where he was joined by U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. "One where power is coming back on, where our people are able to start to fuel up again in their cars, where kids will be going to school, roads are cleared and we'll have clean water to drink."

The number of New Jersey households without power has finally dropped below 1 million, he said, compared with 2.7 million on Tuesday.

The new normal had a few rough patches, however, especially when it came to one of the state's most precious commodities: gasoline. When 75 percent of the state's gas stations went off line, millions of drivers spent hours on lines in the middle of the night, often for naught. Over the weekend, power was restored to the refineries and pipelines, and National Guard tankers are moving some of it to gas stations that ran out of fuel, he said.

The governor also said he turned down requests from FEMA to distribute free gas in New Jersey.

"I was not going to set up the kind of mayhem in New Jersey that they had across the river," in New York, he said.

While the gas lines are still long, some normalcy could be restored to schools this week.

The governor said that as of Saturday night, 800 of the state's 2,400 schools were definitely going to have school today, with more trying to open their doors today.

"As long as the conditions are safe, we're encouraging districts to be creative in order to open their doors," he said.

In addition, the state has had to set up temporary polling places for Tuesday's election and is also watching a nor'easter forecast for Wednesday that could have winds as high as 40-50 mph and two to three inches of rain.

Roads from Highlands to Monmouth Beach were "almost clear" and he said a passable road has been built to move construction vehicles so they could clear debris between Bay Head and Seaside Heights, where sand on some Barrier Islands side streets was "calf-deep."

He said NJ Transit bus service is at 90 percent and that in addition to the Northeast Corridor rail line restoring service between Trenton and New York on Friday, service has been restored to four other lines: the North Jersey Coast Line between Woodbridge and New York; the Raritan Valley Line between Raritan and Newark Penn Station; the Main Line from Bergen and Passaic counties to connections at Secaucus Junction; and the Atlantic City Line between Atlantic City and Philadelphia.

To supplement service while service remains suspended on the PATH trains and the flooded lower portion of the North Jersey Coast Line, the federal government today begins providing more than 250 emergency buses to shepherd commuters to Lower Manhattan.

About half of the buses will depart from the PNC Arts Center in Holmdel between 6 and 10 a.m. and arrive at Broadway, with a Church Street pickup between 4 and 8 p.m. Other Broadway-bound bus locations include MetLife Stadium, Newark Liberty International Airport and Liberty State Park.

Buses also will drop off commuters from the Somerset Patriots stadium, Woodbridge and Willowbrook malls and the Ramsey Station Park and Ride to ferries in Hoboken or Weehawken.

In addition, boil-water advisories have been lifted and all 21 New Jersey counties are included in the major disaster declaration, allowing assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"We've got a lot of work to do," Christie said. "But we've already accomplished a lot of things. From 2.7 million households out of power, we're down to under a million in less than six days of work."

Napolitano called Hurricane Sandy "one of the largest natural disasters ever to hit the United States — a storm that covered an area the size of western Europe."

She said FEMA is paying for temporary housing — apartments and hotel rooms — for people unable to be in their homes right away.

Christie remains concerned about the nor'easter forecast for Wednesday.

"That would obviously be a huge pain — huge — to what we're trying to do here," he said. "I can do lots of things. I can't change the weather."

Damage from the monster storm that pummeled New Jersey last Monday night into Tuesday is expected to climb into the many billions and rescue workers are continuing to find new victims — which so far total at least 23 in New Jersey alone.

Experts say economic damage from Sandy along its destructive path, which stretched from New Jersey and New York all the way to the Great Lakes — is already estimated at \$50 billion, putting the storm among the most expensive disasters ever in the United States.

The toll from the storm continues to add up.

Video: Gov Christie updates the situation on the barrier islands following Hurricane Sandy **Video:** Gov Christie updates the situation on the barrier islands following Hurricane Sandy Gov Chris Christie talks about the problems with the roads, natural gas and the timetable for return to the barrier islands following Hurricane Sandy. Video by John Munson/The Star-Ledger Watch video

Along the Jersey Shore, traffic lights Sunday morning remained dark in spots along Drum Point Road in Brick, where downed trees and wires made travel difficult.

Storm-weary residents, still out of power and cleaning up homes destroyed by flooding, stopped by a makeshift central store at the intersection of Woodland Drive, where Ashley Emmons watched over several tables filled with jugs of coffee and hot chocolate, doughnuts, ramen noodles, tomato soup and other food and supplies.

Homemade cardboard signs attached to the tables invited the hungry: "Free Food." One man stopped his car and grabbed a pack of bottled water.

Emmons said although her home remains without power, she was fortunate enough to not have any flooding damage. She was able to get back in her Woodland Drive home on Tuesday and by Wednesday morning, she and her parents set up the food and supplies for neighbors, taking shifts to keep the tables manned throughout the day.

After starting with just coffee and hot chocolate, the inventory has steadily increased as people have dropped off more supplies for those in need.

"It's cool to see the way everyone is coming together," Emmons said. "They've lost a lot. They still have a smile. They're still here to support each other."

Kim Reynolds of Vanard Drive, stopping for a cup of hot coffee, said her small bungalow home was totally flooded during the storm.

"I thought I was going to die," she said, recalling how the water had risen up to her waist during the height of the storm. "We just ran away."

Her family piled into one car. The cars they left behind are destroyed, she said.

"Now we're just going to clean up some more today," Reynolds said.

There is a lot of cleanup to be done. At the end of Drum Point Road by the Shore Acres Yacht Club, the skeleton of what was once a garage stands, siding and walls ripped off parts of the structure. Caution tape is wrapped around what remains of the building.

Next door several destroyed cars sit in the front lawn. A window is lodged through the front windshield of a silver BMW.

The front windows of a Volvo are blown out and bay grass and other debris fills the back of the car. Nearby the roof of a structure sits on the ground in front of a house with cedar shake siding.

Piles of what were once the living rooms of residents' home are stacked up along the streets of this neighborhood by the bay. Water-soaked couches, televisions and carpets line the roads.

In Union Beach, Melanie Salama gathered with more than 150 others in the cold and dark — but dry and intact — Holy Family Roman Catholic Church on Route 36 to hear Pastor Mark Devlin's sermon about "loving your neighbor as you love yourself."

"By sharing what we have, we are proving our love for our neighbor," said Devlin, who at times relied on a battery-operated lantern to perform the service.

He recapped how the parish has assisted Sandy victims, explaining that the elementary school closed three years ago because of declining enrollment has served as a shelter for 200 people at the height of the disaster. Some 60 remained because they had no family in the area.

The National Guard is using the school lot on Route 36 for a staging area and a food distribution site.

While Salama is not a member of the congregation, the Hazlet resident said she worshipped there this morning because she wanted to show support for the storm-struck community.

In the rear church parking lot, teenagers and young adults gathered to be dispatched for volunteer duties after services earlier this morning.

"Look at all those kids coming out," Hannah Zachariades said admiringly after the service.

She's upset that most of her home was destroyed, but she spent more time raving about the food and comfort provided to her and her neighbors. "Those kids are wonderful."

###

Football game brings some relief from storm damage

Associated Press

Courtney Davis has no idea what her house looks like because her town of Sea Bright was washed away by Superstorm Sandy.

Yet she was at the Meadowlands on Sunday when the Steelers beat the Giants 24-20.

"We need this," Davis said. "We could really use this game and having a good time."

Davis and many other fans tailgating outside MetLife Stadium said they were thankful NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell did not postpone the game or order it moved to Pittsburgh. And Goodell stopped by to do some tailgating himself, then meet on the field and congratulate first responders, calling them "heroes."

Asked about concerns for playing the game, Goodell said:

"I sure didn't hear that here. I didn't hear it out in the parking lot. In fact, exactly the opposite of that ... 'we want to be able to get away from what we have been dealing with all week for a while' and a couple of guys said, 'This re-energized us. We're ready to go back.'

"That's a nice sense."

The game was never in real danger of being called off, unlike Sunday's New York City Marathon that was canceled on Friday after growing public pressure.

Given the gas shortage in the state — New Jersey has implemented a rationing program — and a depleted mass transit available, the Giants urged fans to carpool to the stadium. In their conversation before the weekend, Goodell was assured by Gov. Chris Christie that the game wouldn't divert any major resources from relief efforts.

Giants coach Tom Coughlin emphasized how important the game was — and how upsetting the defeat was.

"That's as disappointing a loss as we've had in a long time," he said. "Not to be overly reactionary or emotional, to play against a very good football team like that ... we wanted emotionally to win the game so badly for obvious reasons, for our neighbors who are struggling, who needed some type of inspiration and we didn't provide it."

Davis described a beach town that looked more like the desert, with sand dunes piled 8 feet high and bulldozers trying to level them "just like you see in a blizzard."

"Debris everywhere," she added. "We have no idea when we can go back."

Earlier in the week, seeing Steelers-Giants didn't enter her thoughts. But as the weekend began, she decided the Meadowlands was the right place to be.

So while the parking lots filled up and smoke rose from barbecues, people who lost power but not resolve found their way to a football game. And to each other.

"I think there's a sense of release, to take your mind off it," said Tara Brewster of Staten Island, the New York City borough devastated by the hurricane and its aftermath. "If they changed this game to another day, I really wouldn't have been upset, but everyone is coming together. New York is the kind of city that handles everything."

Jim Turbek had 30 inches of water in his basement, even though he lives nowhere near the shore. He went to the game.

"The water was coming in waves," Turbek recalled about a canal overflowing near his home. "We probably lost all our appliances, and my chimney fell in, too."

Turbek never considered missing the game. His brother was a big Steelers fan, so Turbek wore a Steelers cap and said he was "here because Steven would have come. It's good to get back into a routine."

He waited 75 minutes for gas to make sure he could get to the Meadowlands and then home, a distance of 45 miles each way.

Ryan Plaza was not impacted by the storm in his hometown of Sugarloaf, Pa., but he brought 15 gallons of gas to his cousin in New Jersey, then headed to the stadium. Standing nearby was Roger Daly of Norwood, N.J., who has had season tickets since the Giants played in Yankee Stadium; they moved to New Jersey in 1976. His search for gas led him to the U.S. Military Academy, and then even farther north.

"I'm retired from the National Guard and went to West Point for gas, but they ran out," he said. "So I kept going up the thruway and happened to find gas. I made a 60-mile trip each way to get gas."

He was glad to be at the stadium, believing it delivers some sort of a message.

"We're Americans and we can handle anything," Daly said. "I feel bad for everyone who got wiped out, but we have to live our lives like we always did. I still don't have telephone, Internet, but I'm here and this is a good release."

As Kathleen Marzolla described the scene in Hoboken, N.J., which is on the Hudson River and was among the hardest hit places in the state, she got a text message that made her jump for joy. Literally.

"We've got power back. We've got power," she said as her brother, Kevin, pumped his fist.

Hoboken was a ghost town for portions of the week, with water everywhere, she said. Her friend's car was submerged in the overflow, and all the businesses in town were closed for much of the week. But on Sunday afternoon, she finally could smile again.

"We needed this today," she said.

Steelers fans seem to pop up at every road game the team plays and this one was no exception, despite the challenges. Shawn Morrow and Wayne Alling drove in from Pittsburgh, although they believed the game might get pushed back to Monday night. They were stunned by what they saw, Morrow describing areas they drove past in New Jersey as "a war zone."

"Huge trees uprooted, 50 people or more standing in line at a gas station with gas cans; no cars, but the cans," Morrow said.

"We didn't know about the rationing," Alling added. "We have an odd number (license plate) and we weren't sure if we could gas."

They did, and they were enjoying some barbecue in the parking lot, surrounded by thousands of others who found their way to the Meadowlands.

One of those people plunked a pumpkin on a car hood. On it, in black magic marker, was written "We Will Survive."

###

Storm Poses First Major Test for NJTV News Coverage

Elizabeth Jensen
New York Times

During his 6 p.m. newscast Thursday, the NJTV anchor Mike Schneider got a little cranky on the air, after twice trying, unsuccessfully, to interview Representative Frank LoBiondo, Republican of New Jersey, over a patchy cellphone line.

"I'm going to make an executive decision here right now, control room," Mr. Schneider said. "We're going to just basically move on."

His annoyance was understandable. He and his minimal staff at the public broadcaster had been churning out up to three live newscasts, many news breaks and several official news briefings daily since Oct. 28, the previous Sunday, to try to keep up with Hurricane Sandy and its aftermath.

NJTV's efforts, all of which were also streamed on its Web site, were modest compared with the major commercial broadcasters in New York City, which were on the air around the clock. But they were a leap forward for NJTV, which does not have live transmission trucks and is not set up for covering a statewide disaster.

The storm was the first major test for NJTV, which WNET, the New York public broadcaster, has operated since July 2011. The change occurred after Gov. Chris Christie, despite criticism, dismantled the New Jersey Network, the state's public broadcasting operation. The network's public radio stations were sold to WNYC of New York and WHYY of Pennsylvania, and the contract for the television operation went to WNET.

Critics said they feared the outsiders would not devote resources to cover New Jersey. Many of those critics did not respond or declined to comment on NJTV's storm coverage.

For its newscasts, NJTV turned to its three reporters and a freelancer. They used rented \$30,000 backpacks with live uplink capabilities and cellphones to file reports. The backpacks had been rented for NJTV's election coverage. "We don't have the money to buy them," said John Servidio, general manager of NJTV.

NJTV also relied on the New Jersey News Commons, a nascent coalition for online news — commercial, nonprofit and volunteer — based at Montclair State University, in Montclair. The school was an unsuccessful bidder for the NJN television operation, but since then has created a campus hub for statewide news coverage. NJTV and WNYC are basing operations there.

The storm was responsible for the coalition maturing "from infancy to adolescence" in one week, Mr. Servidio said.

"This has been the opportunity for it to jell," said Jim Schachter, vice president for news at WNYC, which also tapped into News Commons' resources for storm coverage.

Debbie Galant, director of New Jersey News Commons, put a trial version of the new site up just before the storm. All week it pushed out links to NJTV's Web streams of news conferences by Mr. Christie, hyperlocal news sites and statewide newspaper coverage. It also served as a Twitter clearinghouse for news from the volunteer Jersey Shore Hurricane News, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management and Bob Ingle, senior political columnist for Gannett New Jersey Newspapers.

By the end of the week, the site had registered more than 200,000 page views, Ms. Galant said. An official Web site will begin Monday, much sooner than planned, at NJNewscommons.org.

With much of the state without power, NJTV's newscasts could not be seen everywhere, and battery-powered radio filled the void. Because the hurricane was a regionwide event, WNYC, which was operating on generator power in Lower Manhattan, started simulcasting coverage on its New York and New Jersey radio frequencies. WNYC has two full-time New Jersey reporters and added a freelancer; it also deployed other reporters to the state, Mr. Schachter said.

Since WNYC bought four of the NJN radio stations, Laura Walker, WNYC's chief executive, has raised \$1.57 million from foundations to expand those operations. Two reporters will be added soon, Mr. Schachter said.

The storm "affirms the need for much stronger New Jersey coverage," Ms. Walker said. "I only wish we were totally at full force, which we're not quite yet."

The week's coverage has not come cheaply. Ms. Walker estimated WNYC's costs for covering the storm at \$300,000 to \$500,000, and perhaps \$300,000 for repairing its AM transmitter, which sits in a tidal swamp and went off the air in the storm. Mr. Servidio declined to put a price on NJTV's expenses.

Some costs will be defrayed by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which on Monday will announce grants of \$250,000 each to WNYC and WNET for the unexpected expenses, said Michael Levy, a spokesman for the corporation. Ms. Walker said she has also been talking to station supporters about picking up some costs; the station has not yet decided whether to solicit listener donations.

###

OPINION

Chris Christie has the chance to be a real leader on climate change

David Sirota hosts the morning show on AM760 in Colorado and is a contributing writer at Salon.com.
The Oregonian

In light of horrific wildfires, a historic drought and now the destruction wrought by Hurricane Sandy, the political understatement of the year has to be President Barack Obama's recent comment to MTV. Asked about climate change's absence from all presidential debates for the first time in a generation, he said, "I am surprised it didn't come up."

Instead of "surprised" he should have said "appalled" -- because that's what he and most Americans should be. As Scientific American reports, while no one weather event can be blamed on climate change, science now definitively "link(s) climate change directly to intense storms and other extreme weather events."

Of course, the reason the issue hasn't "come up" in a presidential campaign roiled by climate-related disasters is because many voters refuse to acknowledge that human-intensified climate change is real. Indeed, you can show people the data; you can show them photos of coastal devastation; you can even show them the ultraconservative insurance industry admitting "the footprints of climate change are around us" -- and nonetheless, too many will still insist it is all just a liberal fantasy manufactured by Al Gore. That's because, in a country where self-image is defined by party allegiance, the GOP's fealty to fossil fuel companies and its corresponding rejection of climate science means many Republicans categorically ignore environmental truths.

This is why, just days before the national election, New Jersey's Republican Gov. Chris Christie is a potentially more important political figure than anyone running for the White House. Thanks to his fame, his credibility among conservatives and his ubiquitous media presence during the cataclysm, he has the rare chance to persuade Republicans to discard their denialism and finally face reality.

If it seems silly to hope for any GOP rising star to even admit the seriousness of climate change, recall that in 2011 the governor declared that "we know enough to know that we are at least part of the problem," that "climate change is real" and that "human activity plays a role in these changes."

Skeptics will point out that some of those statements were made as Christie was vetoing legislation to continue his state's participation in a key greenhouse-gas-reduction program. And they will also note, as the New York Observer did, that "Christie has so far only given (the climate issue) lip service without acting on his convictions" (Christie famously screaming at people to "get the hell off the beach!" does not count as acting on convictions).

These are fair criticisms. But with Christie's rhetoric so different from his party's, and with his own state so jeopardized by the climate crisis, there remains reason to hope that he will step up and be a transformative figure -- especially considering his personal connection to the consequences of inaction. This is a man, after all, who appeared genuinely distraught over how this week's climate-intensified hurricane laid waste to his heritage.

"The Jersey Shore of my youth is gone," he lamented to his Twitter followers. "The rides I took my kids on this summer are in the Atlantic Ocean."

Regrettably, he's right -- but unlike many Americans, he is in a position to prevent even more of that heritage from being washed away.

No, he doesn't have to channel Obama and feign shock that climate change hasn't "come up." No, he doesn't have to accept the pathetic post-9/11 definition of leadership as a politician simply praising fellow politicians and avoiding a televised nervous breakdown during a disaster. Instead, he can opt to be a real leader -- one who marshals the power of the national spotlight to demand that his party get serious about the climate crisis.

It's his choice. Here's hoping he makes the right one before it is too late.

###

Working together in wake of storm

Editorial

The Record Editorial Board

Beyond scenes of unimaginable destruction and crazy-long gas lines, some of the enduring images of the storm that hit our state a week ago today have got to be Governor Christie and President Obama embracing while touring Sandy-ravaged Brigantine.

That is how government is supposed to work. When there are problems to be solved or a disaster to deal with, you forget about political party. If there is no Democratic or Republican way to fix a pot hole, as the old saying goes, there certainly is no Democratic or Republican way to rebuild after a devastating storm.

We saw that last week, and it was nice to see. The governor effusively praised the response of the federal government to Sandy's wrath, and the president returned the favor, telling the press Christie would do all he could to rebuild.

What is truly remarkable about the good feeling between the two men is that neither lives in a vacuum. Obama is running for reelection and Christie, who toyed with running himself, has been a vocal supporter of Republican candidate Mitt Romney. The men are not oblivious to the bigger picture, but they have been able to set it aside for the good of the country and state. That's what political leadership is supposed to be about.

The unfortunate thing is that it takes catastrophic occurrences — think 9/11 — for our leaders to put aside the desire to score political points whenever they can. We have seen some bipartisan accord in Trenton over health and pension reform and restructuring higher education, but not in Washington, where disagreement even keeps the country from adopting an official national budget.

This brings us to Tuesday's election, where we will choose not only a president and U.S. senator, but 12 members of the House of Representatives and hundreds of county and local officials. How beneficial it will be to the state and nation if those who win office pledge to work with those with whom they disagree for the good of the public.

A while back, the governor was ridiculing the president as a man unable to find the light switch in a dark room. Last week, Christie understood that the state needs the president to help it recover. And Obama understood that helping New Jersey is part of his job as president. That says what we need loud and clear: politicians who put the job they were elected to do before anything else.

That may be too much to ask. As we have seen with the political bipartisanship in the wake of 9/11, it can fade quickly. However, we would be remiss if we didn't comment on another news item last week that some may have missed.

After nearly three years of disagreeing over just about everything, the Christie administration and the New Jersey Education Association are finding common ground. Last week, the NJEA wisely canceled its annual convention in storm-battered Atlantic City — to have been held this Thursday and Friday — and urged its local memberships to talk with school officials about working those days instead. If the teachers' union and Christie can get on the same page, bipartisanship actually may have a chance.

###

Tomorrow, a crucial vote on two state ballot questions

Editorial

Star-Ledger Editorial Board

President Obama and Sen. Robert Menendez are expected to win New Jersey handily in the two key races tomorrow, so those with a casual attitude toward the duties of citizenship might be tempted to save some gas by skipping the vote.

Please get off the couch. If you don't care about making your voice heard in the marquee races, remember the two important state ballot questions.

One would authorize a bond issue of \$750 million for higher education. That's a smart investment, with bipartisan support. It will create good jobs and help ensure that middle-class kids have a shot at a good, affordable college education.

New Jersey is near the top in spending on K-12, and near the bottom on higher education. For every 100 kids who graduate high school, we have room for only 19 in public colleges and universities. The labs and classrooms are often shabby.

The result is skyrocketing tuitions, now among the highest in the country, and spotty educational quality. The lack of space means that many capable kids must leave the state and spend much more to get a degree. Or abandon the idea altogether.

As important, this will create and save jobs. We are losing high-tech jobs, not because of our taxes, but because private firms are forming research partnerships with better research universities in other states. We need to do better.

Also on the ballot is a constitutional amendment intended to ensure that judges will be included in the pension and health reforms signed last year by Gov. Chris Christie.

Yes, they should be included. But this poorly drafted amendment would allow politicians to single out judges for harsher treatment, leaving them vulnerable to political retaliation over their rulings and compromising their independence. We urge a "no" vote.

###

Looking for the faces of mass transit

Alfred P. Doblin

The Record

A week after Hurricane Sandy, the effectiveness of three regional leaders has been much dissected by the media and public. Governor Christie, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg have been front and center these past seven days.

Less prominent have been the three regional leaders of the transit networks that traverse New York and New Jersey. Let me correct that to two transit officials.

Joe Lhota, the chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, is worth his weight in gold — or at least old subway tokens. The New York subway didn't get up to speed fast enough to help most commuters last week, but Lhota did the thing leaders are supposed to do: He gave answers and took questions in the public's eye.

Lhota put himself out there in front of television cameras and reporters and explained what was happening. And a lot of it wasn't good.

I use the New York City subway, PATH and NJ Transit to get to work five days a week. Mass transit is my lifeline. Last week, I walked across the Brooklyn Bridge to car-pool to New Jersey from Manhattan. It was a challenge. Yet the walking was the least unpleasant part of my commute because I knew what was happening with the subways.

Not the case with the PATH. There were no regular press conferences by Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Chairman David Samson explaining what was happening with the ports, the PATH or ferries. The same was true of NJ Transit. James Weinstein, the agency's executive director, was not putting his face out to the public, either.

Let me be clear: I make no judgment on what any of these transit agency heads were doing behind the scenes. The massive shutdown of all transit systems was unprecedented. These men had a lot to do. And I expect they were doing it. But since none of them was required to pump out a tunnel or put in a new electrical switch, all of them could have talked to the public they serve. If Lhota got it right, there is no reason the Port Authority and NJ Transit could not as well.

Commuters need information. They don't require good news. They just require news. Exactly how bad is it at Hoboken? Is there a chance that PATH service could be restored from Grove Street to 33rd Street? What are the different challenges to restoring service on the Main Line and the Bergen Line?

Clearly, the three transit agencies have their hands full. But the public they serve needs as much attention as does the actual crisis. Going forward, all three agencies need to have a doomsday plan for a repeat scenario when every transit system is knocked out.

When Bloomberg announced a three-passenger restriction on bridge crossings, New Jersey transit officials should have had a plan to turn the massive parking lots of MetLife Stadium into a Meet-and-Ride. Encourage commuters to drive to the lots, form car pools and get into Manhattan. NJ Transit could have staged express buses at the Meadowlands that simply moved people from the parking lots to the Port Authority Bus Terminal.

Bergen, Passaic and Hudson county officials should develop a plan to coordinate buses to Meet-and-Ride locations. All those malls in Paramus have large parking lots.

The trouble in New Jersey and New York, I firmly believe, is that the people making decisions in state houses and in transit agencies, by and large, never have to depend on mass transit, so when it fails, they have no clue how to develop contingency plans that make sense to commuters. They understand they have "to fix it," but they do not understand the public's frustration over a lack of an alternative while the fixing occurs.

From what little I have seen walking back and forth over the Brooklyn Bridge most of last week, commuters are a hardy lot. I have swapped stories with folks about the walk in the dark in Manhattan and whether the few alternatives offered by the MTA were better. The general consensus was they were not. The lines for shuttle buses from Brooklyn to Manhattan were brutal.

Nothing can change the fact that Hoboken floods. But something should be done to ensure that ferry service could be expanded quickly if rail service disappears. Bus connectors to operable rail segments must be established quickly.

The MTA, Port Authority and NJ Transit should create space on their websites for commuter suggestions of what could have made these past days better. We use the system. We want it to work. And when it doesn't, we want to hear and see transit officials, not printed releases.

Joe Lhota got it right.

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Storm shows Jersey's vulnerabilities

Jeff Tittel is the director of the New Jersey chapter of the Sierra Club.
The Record

New Jersey continues to recover from the heartbreaking damage of Hurricane Sandy. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the families impacted by this tragedy.

This is the ninth such devastating storm to hit the Garden State in the last five years, and the impacts of climate change will only make such storms worse. We have had hurricanes and Halloween snowstorms. There have been too many coincidences. You cannot deny that climate disruption is a factor and it is impacting New Jersey.

We need to protect our families from the impacts of climate disruption and sea level rise. In New Jersey, we deserve strong action by our leaders to help reduce the likelihood and severity of future disasters.

Hurricane Sandy is our worst fears come true. This is exactly the kind of storm climate scientists and environmentalists warned about, and now we have seen firsthand the impacts from these types of storms. We are concerned that without real policy changes, such storms will not only continue to happen but will get much worse.

The areas hit hardest by Hurricane Sandy are the areas we have said for a long time are most vulnerable for flooding and storm surges. Yet we have done nothing to increase protections in those areas. Climate scientists and environmentalists have worried for years about overdevelopment on barrier islands along our coasts. Given climate change and sea level rise, these areas are even more vulnerable to storms such as Sandy.

A study by Rutgers University four years ago found that, given the storm surges as a result of climate change, 9 percent of New Jersey's land area could be underwater. Some of these areas are the fastest-growing places in New Jersey. Other places are critical infrastructure for the state such as Newark Airport, nuclear power plants, electrical generation plants, sewer plants, chemical plants, and transportation hubs. We have failed to protect this vital infrastructure.

Climate disruption worsens extreme weather, threatening our families and communities. Scientists agree that climate change can cause rain and snowstorms, drought periods, and wildfires to become more severe. Yet our governor is rolling back policies that reduce climate change pollution and promote clean energy.

Governor Christie is moving New Jersey in the wrong direction when it comes to climate change by pulling us out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and cutting clean-energy funding. He has eliminated the Office of Climate Change in DEP to study the impacts of climate change and help develop plans to combat them.

New Jersey is a coastal state and sees the most severe impacts of these storms. Instead of reducing greenhouse gases and pollution and protecting low-lying areas from flooding, we are doing the opposite and weakening the protections we currently have in place.

As we burn dirty fossil fuels like coal and natural gas, large amounts of greenhouse-gas pollution such as carbon dioxide and methane are released into the air, increasing average temperatures across the world. Christie has supported and heavily subsidized the construction of three new natural gas plants in New Jersey as well as allowing a number of new major pipeline expansion projects to be approved through environmentally sensitive and densely populated areas.

We need clean-energy solutions to combat climate disruption and ease the severe consequences of these extreme storms. Instead of moving us toward a clean-energy economy, the governor has pulled us out of RGGI, jeopardizing clean-energy funding and green jobs.

The governor has taken more than \$600 million in clean-energy funds, and last year he took \$63 million dollars of funding from RGGI to balance his budget. The governor's revised Energy Master Plan reduces our renewable

energy goals from 30 percent to 22.5 percent in favor of more fossil fuels, contributing to climate-change pollution.

As we continue to understand the devastation and impacts of Hurricane Sandy, we are going to need to change things in New Jersey. Such storms will happen more frequently and be our future unless we make some tough decisions.

In addition to relief aid, we need our leaders to come up with better policies to address the impacts of flooding and climate change on our coast and flood-prone areas.

It is going to take partnership and difficult choices on limiting development in flood-prone areas, moving people out of harm's way and developing real, comprehensive programs to reduce greenhouse gases and protect us from climate change and sea-level rise.

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